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ABSTRACT

The 1998 NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress) state level reading assessment measured fourth- and eighth-grade students' reading proficiency in situations that involved reading for three purposes: reading for literary experience, reading to gain information, and reading to perform a task (grade 8 only). This report describes the reading proficiency of Arkansas fourth-grade public school students, as well as the proficiency of eighth-grade public and nonpublic students, and compares their overall performance to students in the Southeast region of the United States and the nation (using data from the NAEP national assessments). The distribution of reading results and reading achievement level results are provided for subpopulations of students (gender, race/ethnicity, students' reports of parents' highest educational level, free/reduced-price lunch program eligibility, and type of location). The average reading proficiency of fourth-grade public school students in Arkansas on the NAEP reading scale was 209 compared to 215 nationwide; 256 compared to 261 nationwide for eighth-grade public school students; and 279 compared to 281 nationwide for eighth-grade nonpublic school students. (RS)

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STATE REPORT FOR ARKANSAS

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THE NATION'S REPORT CARD, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what America's students know and can do in various subject areas. Since 1969, assessments have been conducted periodically in reading, mathematics, science, writing, history, geography, and other fields. By making objective information on student performance available to policymakers at the national, state, and local levels, NAEP is an integral part of our nation's evaluation of the condition and progress of education. Only information related to academic achievement is collected under this program. NAEP guarantees the privacy of individual students and their families.

NAEP is a congressionally mandated project of the National Center for Education Statistics, the U.S. Department of Education. The Commissioner of Education Statistics is responsible, by law, for carrying out the NAEP project through competitive awards to qualified organizations. NAEP reports directly to the Commissioner, who is also responsible for providing continuing reviews, including validation studies and solicitation of public comment, on NAEP's conduct and usefulness.

In 1988, Congress established the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB) to formulate policy guidelines for NAEP. The Board is responsible for selecting the subject areas to be assessed from among those included in the National Education Goals; for setting appropriate student performance levels; for developing assessment objectives and test specifications through a national consensus approach; for designing the assessment methodology; for developing guidelines for reporting and disseminating NAEP results; for developing standards and procedures for interstate, regional, and national comparisons; for determining the appropriateness of test items and ensuring they are free from bias; and for taking actions to improve the form and use of the National Assessment.

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NAEP 1998 Reading

STATE REPORT FOR ARKANSAS

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In collaboration with

Alfred Rogers

March 1999

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

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SECTION 1 Overview of the NAEP Reading Assessment

What Is NAEP?

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative and continuing assessment of what students in the United States know and can do in various academic subjects. NAEP is authorized by Congress and directed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), an independent body, provides policy guidance for NAEP. The NAEP assessments are administered to representative samples of students at the national level as well as at the state level for those states that want to participate. To ensure comparability in a particular subject across all jurisdictions, NCES has established guidelines for school and student participation rates. These guidelines, as well as other technical aspects of the assessment, are detailed in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*.[1]

The 1998 NAEP program included state-level assessments in reading at grades 4 and 8 and in writing at grade 8, and national-level assessments in civics, reading, and writing at grades 4, 8, and 12. This report and its companion, the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*, provide a first look at the results of the NAEP 1998 reading assessment. The *Reading Report Card* offers additional state-level data. Each participating jurisdiction receives its own customized *State Report* identical in format to this one. Summary data tables providing information for all jurisdictions for which results are reported in 1998 are available at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/, the NAEP Web site.

What Is Reported Here?

The NAEP reading assessment has been administered at the state level three times: in public schools at grade 4 in 1992, in public and nonpublic schools at grade 4 in 1994, and in public and nonpublic schools at grades 4 and 8 in 1998. Arkansas participated in the 1998 NAEP reading assessment at grades 4 and 8. Both public and nonpublic schools participated; however, minimum participation guidelines for publication of results were not met for nonpublic schools at grade 4. Arkansas also participated in the NAEP reading assessments in 1992 and 1994. Arkansas' public school results for 1992, 1994, and 1998 and grade 8 nonpublic school results for 1998 are presented here, along with national and regional results for comparison.

This report has two sections. This **Overview** provides basic information on NAEP and the overall results for public schools in graphic form. It describes the assessment, the sample of students assessed, the metrics for reporting student performance, and how the differences in performance are reported. The second section, **Overall Reading Performance and Performance by Demographic Characteristics**, reports findings for the entire public school population at grades 4 and 8 as well as for the population broken out by major demographic categories and school type. This information is presented in data tables.

[1] Donahue, P. L., Voelkl, K. E., Campbell, J. R., and Mazzeo, J. (1999). *The NAEP 1998 reading report card for the nation and the states* (NCES Publication No. 1999-500). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

In addition, this report has two appendices. Appendix A, **Where to Find More Information**, describes the data available on the Web and provides information on sources of related data. Appendix B, **Figures from Section 1**, displays full-page replicas of Figures 1–5.

The demographic data provided in this report are only a small portion of the data available from the several hundred questions asked of students, teachers, and school principals in order to provide context for NAEP results. Overall results for all student and school variables for public school students in each participating jurisdiction are available in summary data tables at the NAEP Web site.

How Are Results Reported?

In this report, as in other NAEP reports, only those results based on preestablished minimum sample sizes are reported. For details, see the forthcoming *NAEP 1998 Technical Report*. The results are reported in terms of two metrics, descriptions of which follow and details of which can be found in the *Reading Report Card*.

- **Average NAEP reading scale scores** are reported for all students or for subgroups of students.
- **Percentages of students in each achievement level**: that is, the students' scale scores place them into three categories: at or above the *Basic* level, at or above the *Proficient* level, and at the *Advanced* level. Also reported are the percentages of students whose scores are below the *Basic* level.

The bulleted statements in the text as well as the symbols in the tables are based on the results of statistical tests of the data. The reader is cautioned to rely on the results of these statistical tests rather than on the apparent magnitude of any difference in scale scores or percentages in making inferences from the data.

The NAEP Reading Scale

Students' responses to the NAEP 1998 reading assessment were analyzed to determine the percentages of students responding correctly to each multiple-choice question or in each of several score categories for constructed-response questions (requiring a short or long written answer). Three scales were developed, one for each of the three purposes for reading: *reading for literary experience; reading to gain information*; and *reading to perform a task* (grades 8 and 12 only). The purposes for reading are described fully in the companion *Reading Report Card* and in the *Reading Framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress*,[2] both available on the Web (see Appendix A). Student performance by each of the purposes for reading appears in the percentile data tables at the NAEP Web site. The scales summarize results across all three grades. The scale for each of the purposes for reading ranges from 0 to 500 and is linked to its corresponding scale from 1992 and 1994. An overall composite scale was developed by weighting each of the three subscales based on its relative importance in the NAEP reading framework. This composite scale is the metric used to present the average scale scores and selected percentiles in this and other reports.

[2] National Assessment Governing Board. (1993). *Reading framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress: 1992–1998*. Washington, DC: Author.

The Reading Achievement Levels

In addition to the NAEP reading scale, results are also reported in terms of the reading achievement levels authorized by the NAEP legislation[3] and adopted by the National Assessment Governing Board. The achievement levels are performance standards based on the collective judgments about what students should be expected to know and to do. Viewing students' performance from this perspective provides some insight into the adequacy of students' knowledge and skills and the extent to which they achieved expected levels of performance. The Board reviewed and adopted the recommended achievement levels derived from the judgments of a broadly representative panel that included teachers, education specialists, and members of the general public.

For each grade tested, the Board has adopted three achievement levels: *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. For reporting purposes, the achievement level cut scores for each grade represent the boundaries between four ranges on the NAEP reading scale: below *Basic*, *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced*. The policy definitions of the achievement levels are shown below. The text of the descriptions of expected reading performance at each achievement level at grades 4 and 8 can be found under the heading **What Should Students Be Able to Do?** later in this section. The cut scores that divide the achievement levels can be found in the footnotes of the tables in Section 2.

Definitions of the achievement levels

Basic	Partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge and skills that are fundamental for proficient work at each grade
Proficient	Solid academic performance for each grade assessed. Students reaching this level have demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter, including subject-matter knowledge, application of such knowledge to real-world situations, and analytical skills appropriate to the subject matter
Advanced	Superior performance

The NAEP legislation requires that the achievement levels be used on a developmental basis until the Commissioner of Education Statistics determines, as the result of a congressionally mandated evaluation by one or more nationally recognized evaluation organizations, that the achievement levels are "reasonable, valid, and informative to the public." Upon review of the available information, the Commissioner of Education Statistics agrees with the National Academy's recommendation that caution needs to be exercised in the use of the current achievement levels, since in the opinion of the Academy "... appropriate validity evidence for the cut scores is lacking; and the process has produced unreasonable results."[4] Therefore, the Commissioner concludes that these achievement levels should continue to be considered developmental and should continue to be interpreted and used with caution. The *Reading Report Card* contains further information on the developmental status of the achievement levels. The Commissioner and the Governing Board believe that the achievement levels are useful for reporting trends in the educational achievement of students in the United States.

[3] The National Education Statistics Act of 1994 requires that the National Assessment Governing Board develop "appropriate student performance levels" for reporting NAEP results.

[4] Pelligrino, J. W., Jones, L. R., and Mitchell, K. J. (Eds.). (1999). *Grading the nation's report card: Evaluating NAEP and transforming the assessment of educational progress* (p. 182). Committee on the Evaluation of the National and State Assessments of Educational Progress, Board on Testing and Assessment, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, National Research Council. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Reading Scale Score Results for Public School Students

Figure 1 on the following page shows graphically Arkansas's performance in terms of average scale scores as compared to that of the Southeast region and the nation. Note that only a small portion of the NAEP reading scale, which actually ranges from 0 to 500, is represented on the vertical axis.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, the average reading scale score of students in Arkansas was 209. This was lower than that of students across the nation (215).
- In Arkansas, the average scale score of students was not significantly different in 1998 (209) from that in 1992 (211). Similarly, the average scale score of fourth graders across the nation was not significantly different in 1998 (215) from that in 1992 (215).
- In Arkansas, the average scale score of students was not significantly different in 1998 (209) from that in 1994 (209). However, the average scale score of fourth graders across the nation was higher in 1998 (215) than in 1994 (212).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In Arkansas, the average reading scale score was 256 in 1998, lower than that of students across the nation (261).

The bulleted statements above give only a few of the assessment's findings. Complete notations of significant differences in overall performance for 1992 as compared to 1998 and for 1994 as compared to 1998 can be found in Table 1A in Section 2. Note that the changes indicated between two particular years show differences in performance between two distinct points in time and are not meant to indicate a general trend through the intervening years. Additional information can be found in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* and on the NAEP Web site. Differences between 1994 and 1992 are not shown in this report; they can be found in the *NAEP 1994 Reading State Report for Arkansas*.

How to read Figure 1

The vertical bars in Figure 1 show reading scores at grade 4 for 1992, 1994, and 1998, and at grade 8 for 1998, along only a portion of the NAEP 0–500 reading scale. The NAEP reading scale is a cross-grade scale (that is, it covers all three grades), so the difference between the performance of fourth graders and eighth graders can be observed. The reader must be sure to look at the actual scores (on top of the bars) rather than at the comparative heights of the bars when comparing performance for the two grades. (Table 1A in Section 2 also shows these scores, their associated standard errors, and the scores' distribution at selected percentiles.)

Arkansas's overall average scale score is followed by those for the Southeast region and for the nation. The regional and national data come from the national sample, which is a different sample from that providing the state data. However, through linking procedures, state and national reading results are placed on the same scale.

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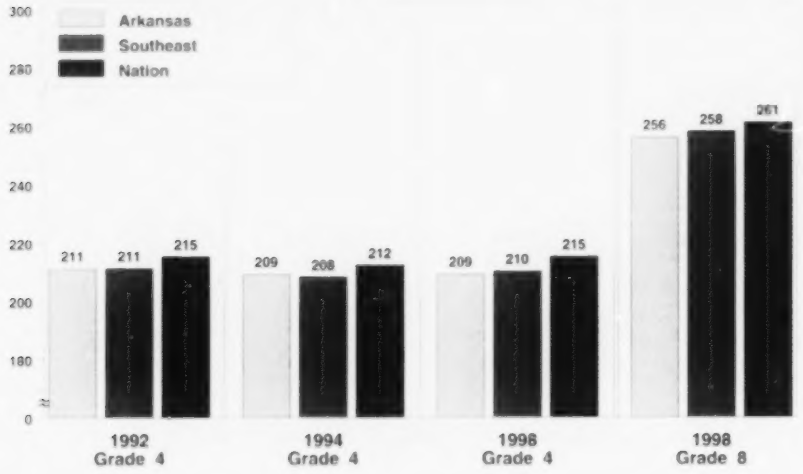
FIGURE 1

Average reading scale scores for public school students at grades 4 and 8



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Achievement Level Results for Public School Students

Figure 2 on the following page shows graphically Arkansas's performance in terms of achievement levels (see page 3 for a description) as compared to that of the Southeast region and the nation.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, the percentage of Arkansas students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was 23 percent. This percentage was smaller than the percentage of the nation's students who performed at the same level (29 percent).
- The percentage of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 (23 percent) from that in 1992 (23 percent).
- The percentage of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 (23 percent) from that in 1994 (24 percent).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In 1998, the percentage of students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas was 23 percent. This percentage was smaller than that of students across the nation (31 percent).

The bulleted statements above give only a few of the assessment's findings. Complete notations of significant changes in overall performance for 1992 as compared with 1998 and for 1994 as compared with 1998 can be found in Table 1B in Section 2. Notations of significant changes between 1994 and 1992 can be found in the *NAEP 1994 Reading State Report for Arkansas*.

How to read Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the percentages of fourth- and eighth-grade students whose scores on the NAEP reading assessment placed them into each of the three achievement levels, or into the range below the *Basic* achievement level. In order to place students in the achievement level categories, scale score cutpoints were set for each level at each grade in 1992, the first year of the assessment. The process of determining the achievement levels is under development; thus, they should be used and interpreted with caution. The *Introduction* to the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* contains further information on the developmental status of achievement levels.

To assist comparisons of performance across the years or comparisons at the state, regional, and national levels, the bars are centered between the top of the *Basic* category and the beginning of the *Proficient* category. There is a vertical line representing 0 percent through this location. A visual comparison of the percentages of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in the jurisdiction and the nation can be made by comparing the extension of the bars to the right of the zero axis.

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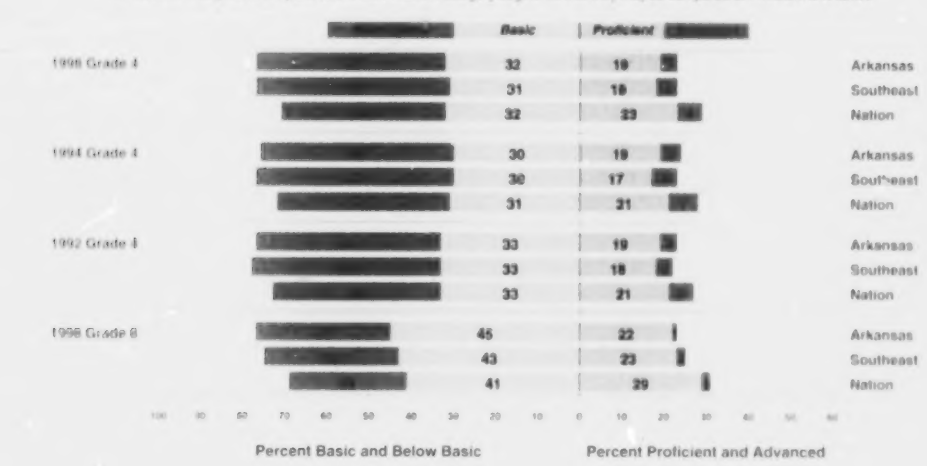
FIGURE 2

Reading achievement level results for public school students at grades 4 and 8



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

The text and tables in this report refer to the percentage of students who score "at or above *Proficient*" and "at or above *Basic*." These percentages are cumulative. For instance, in Table 1B in Section 2, "at or above *Proficient*" appears as a single percentage. In order to compare the percentage in Figures 2, 4, and 5 with that in Table 1B, the percentage appearing in the *Proficient* band in the figures must be added to the percentage in the *Advanced* band to obtain the percentage of students whose scores categorize them as "at or above *Proficient*." Similarly, the sum of the percentages appearing in the *Basic*, *Proficient*, and *Advanced* bands yields the percentage of students "at or above *Basic*."

Figures 2, 4, and 5 allow one to compare performance by the total percentage of a given student population whose scores put the students in the broad category "at or above *Proficient*" (that is, simply comparing bar lengths to the right of the zero axis). Other interesting comparisons might consider the components of the bar lengths. For instance, one student population with 40 percent of its members performing at or above *Proficient* could have 35 percent at *Proficient* and 5 percent at *Advanced*. Another student population, also with 40 percent of its members performing at or above *Proficient*, might have 25 percent at *Proficient* and 15 percent at *Advanced*. In a similar manner, on the left side of the zero axis, much can be gained by comparing the percentage of students performing at the *Basic* level with the percentage below the *Basic* level.

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Comparisons Between Arkansas and Other Participating Jurisdictions

In 1998, 45 states and other jurisdictions participated in the reading assessment. Of those, 43 at grade 4 and 40 at grade 8 met statistical reporting requirements for publishing their public school students' performance on the NAEP reading assessment. The maps in Figure 3 show the participating states and indicate their membership in four U.S. geographic regions. Note that the Virgin Islands and the domestic and overseas Department of Defense Education Activity schools (DoDEA/DDESS and DoDEA/DoDDS) do not belong to any of these regions. Reading results for all participating states and other jurisdictions are available at the NAEP Web site.

Average scale scores: How to read Figure 3

Figure 3 presents maps comparing Arkansas's overall 1998 grade 4 and grade 8 reading scale scores with those of all other participating states and jurisdictions. The different shadings are determined by whether or not Arkansas's average scale score is significantly different (in a statistical sense) from that of each of the other participants in the 1998 NAEP state reading assessment. States that did not participate in 1998, or that did not meet reporting guidelines, are also represented in the maps.

Achievement levels: How to read Figures 4 and 5

Figures 4 and 5 permit comparisons of all participants in the NAEP state assessment, in terms of percentages of public school students performing at or above the *Proficient* level as well as those performing at the *Basic* level and below. As with Figure 3, the participating jurisdictions are arranged into categories reflecting student performance compared to that in Arkansas. The jurisdictions are grouped by whether the percentage of their students with scores at or above the *Proficient* level (including *Advanced*) was higher than, not significantly different from, or lower than the percentage in Arkansas. Note that the arrangement of the states and other jurisdictions within each category is alphabetical; statistical comparisons among the jurisdictions in each of the three groups are not included here.

These figures are available in color at the NAEP Web site. In the companion *Reading Report Card*, there are additional data tables as well as multiple comparison charts permitting comparison of each participating jurisdiction with all others.

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FIGURE 3

Arkansas's 1998 average reading scale score compared to those for other participating jurisdictions for public school students at grades 4 and 8

GRADE 4

Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

GRADE 8

Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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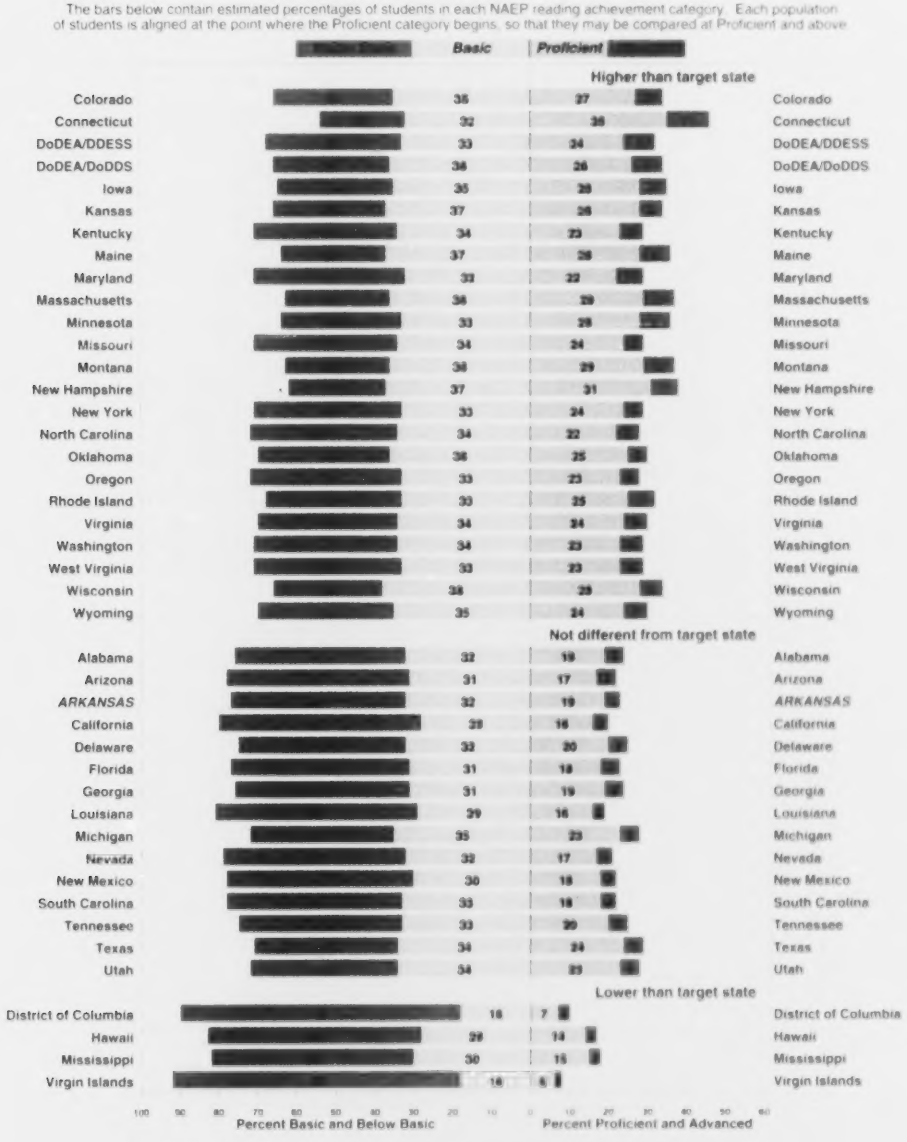
1998 State Assessment

FIGURE 4

Achievement levels for reading: Comparing the percentage of public school students at or above the Proficient level in Arkansas with those in other participating jurisdictions at grade 4 in 1998


The bars below contain estimated percentages of students in each NAEP reading achievement category. Each population of students is aligned at the point where the Proficient category begins, so that they may be compared at Proficient and above.
Basic
Proficient
Higher than target state
Colorado 36 27 Colorado
Connecticut 32 38 Connecticut
DoDEA/DDESS 33 24 DoDEA/DDESS
DoDEA/DoDDS 36 26 DoDEA/DoDDS
Iowa 35 28 Iowa
Kansas 37 26 Kansas
Kentucky 34 23 Kentucky
Maine 37 28 Maine
Maryland 33 22 Maryland
Massachusetts 36 29 Massachusetts
Minnesota 33 28 Minnesota
Missouri 34 24 Missouri
Montana 36 29 Montana
New Hampshire 37 31 New Hampshire
New York 33 24 New York
North Carolina 34 22 North Carolina
Oklahoma 36 25 Oklahoma
Oregon 33 23 Oregon
Rhode Island 33 25 Rhode Island
Virginia 34 24 Virginia
Washington 34 23 Washington
West Virginia 33 23 West Virginia
Wisconsin 36 28 Wisconsin
Wyoming 35 24 Wyoming
Not different from target state
Alabama 32 19 Alabama
Arizona 31 17 Arizona
ARKANSAS 32 19 ARKANSAS
California 29 16 California
Delaware 32 20 Delaware
Florida 31 18 Florida
Georgia 31 19 Georgia
Louisiana 29 16 Louisiana
Michigan 35 23 Michigan
Nevada 32 17 Nevada
New Mexico 30 18 New Mexico
South Carolina 33 18 South Carolina
Tennessee 33 20 Tennessee
Texas 34 24 Texas
Utah 34 23 Utah
Lower than target state
District of Columbia 16 7 District of Columbia
Hawaii 29 14 Hawaii
Mississippi 30 15 Mississippi
Virgin Islands 16 6 Virgin Islands
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Percent Basic and Below Basic
Percent Proficient and Advanced
Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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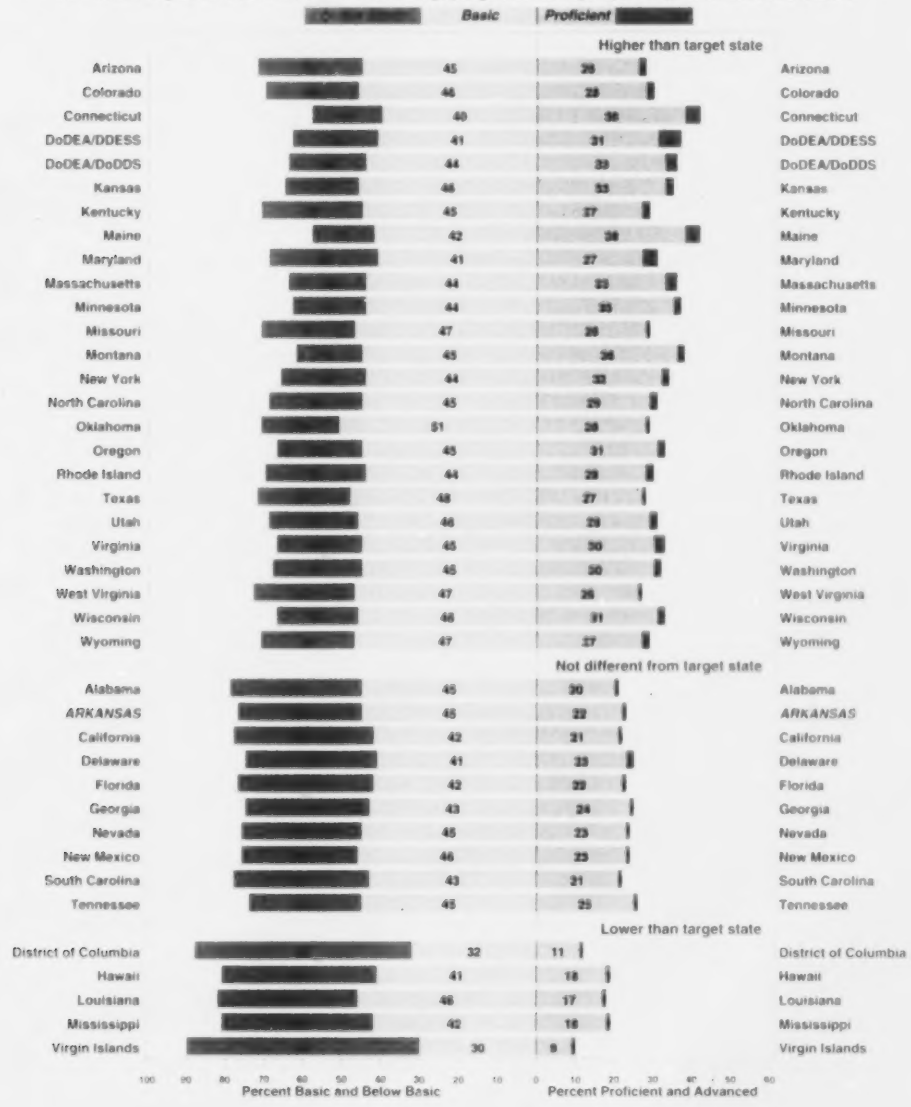
FIGURE 5

Achievement levels for reading: Comparing the percentage of public school students at or above the Proficient level in Arkansas with those in other participating jurisdictions at grade 8 in 1998


The bars below contain estimated percentages of students in each NAEP reading achievement category. Each population of students is aligned at the point where the Proficient category begins, so that they may be compared at Proficient and above.
Basic
Proficient
Higher than target state
Arizona 45 26 Arizona
Colorado 46 28 Colorado
Connecticut 40 36 Connecticut
DoDEA/DDESS 41 31 DoDEA/DDESS
DoDEA/DoDDS 44 33 DoDEA/DoDDS
Kansas 46 33 Kansas
Kentucky 45 27 Kentucky
Maine 42 36 Maine
Maryland 41 27 Maryland
Massachusetts 44 33 Massachusetts
Minnesota 44 35 Minnesota
Missouri 47 28 Missouri
Montana 45 34 Montana
New York 44 32 New York
North Carolina 45 29 North Carolina
Oklahoma 51 28 Oklahoma
Oregon 45 31 Oregon
Rhode Island 44 29 Rhode Island
Texas 48 27 Texas
Utah 46 29 Utah
Virginia 45 30 Virginia
Washington 45 30 Washington
West Virginia 47 26 West Virginia
Wisconsin 46 31 Wisconsin
Wyoming 47 27 Wyoming
Not different from target state
Alabama 45 30 Alabama
ARKANSAS 45 22 ARKANSAS
California 42 21 California
Delaware 41 23 Delaware
Florida 42 22 Florida
Georgia 43 24 Georgia
Nevada 45 23 Nevada
New Mexico 46 23 New Mexico
South Carolina 43 21 South Carolina
Tennessee 45 25 Tennessee
Lower than target state
District of Columbia 32 11 District of Columbia
Hawaii 41 18 Hawaii
Louisiana 46 17 Louisiana
Mississippi 42 18 Mississippi
Virgin Islands 30 9 Virgin Islands
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10 0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Percent Basic and Below Basic
Percent Proficient and Advanced

Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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What Was Assessed?

The subject area content for each NAEP assessment is developed through a congressionally mandated national consensus process directed by the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB). The objectives for each NAEP assessment are described in a framework document that delineates the important content and process areas to be measured, as well as the types of exercises to be included in the assessment.

The *Reading Framework* for the 1992 and 1994 NAEP reading assessments also guided the 1998 reading assessment. This framework was developed under the auspices of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Reflecting current theories of reading, the *Reading Framework* describes reading as a complex interaction among the reader, the text, and the context of the reading situation. According to this interactive view of reading, readers use different strategies and processes depending on the type of text being read and the purposes for reading it.

The framework specifies that students be assessed in reading for three different purposes: *reading for literary experience*, *reading to gain information*, and *reading to perform a task*. The last purpose is not assessed at grade 4. In order to measure students' abilities to read for different purposes, the assessment is composed of three different types of texts, each associated with one purpose for reading.

While responding to text, readers take different approaches in order to understand what is being read. The comprehension process typically involves changing stances, or orientations toward the text. The framework describes four reading stances: *initial understanding*, *developing an interpretation*, *personal response*, and *critical stance*. These stances are not intended to represent a sequential routine of reading abilities nor are they considered hierarchical; rather, they describe reading processes that all readers use at any level of development.

The assessment contains reading materials that were drawn from sources commonly available to students in and out of school. These authentic materials were considered to be representative of the types of reading experiences typically encountered by students. Each student in the state assessment was asked to complete two 25-minute blocks, each consisting of a reading passage and associated comprehension questions at the appropriate grade level. A combination of multiple-choice and constructed-response questions was used to assess students' understanding of the passages. The passages and associated items followed a distribution specified by the framework.

Distribution of items by purpose for reading as specified by the Reading Framework

Purpose	Grade 4	Grade 8
For literary experience	55%	40%
To gain information	45%	40%
To perform a task	(none)	20%

What Should Students Be Able to Do?

The following grade-specific achievement level descriptions focus on the interaction of the reader, the text, and the context. The achievement level descriptions reflect what readers performing at each achievement level should be able to do. The achievement levels are cumulative from *Basic* to *Proficient* to *Advanced*. Each level builds on the previous level such that knowledge at the *Proficient* level presumes mastery of the *Basic* level, and knowledge at the *Advanced* level presumes mastery of both the *Basic* and *Proficient* levels.

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FIGURE 6A

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 4

BASIC LEVEL (208)	Fourth-grade students performing at the Basic level should demonstrate an understanding of the overall meaning of what they read. When reading text appropriate for fourth graders, they should be able to make relatively obvious connections between the text and their own experiences and extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences.
PROFICIENT LEVEL (238)	Fourth-grade students performing at the Proficient level should be able to demonstrate an overall understanding of the text, providing inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making inferences, drawing conclusions, and making connections to their own experiences. The connection between the text and what the student infers should be clear.
ADVANCED LEVEL (268)	Fourth-grade students performing at the Advanced level should be able to generalize about topics in the reading selection and demonstrate an awareness of how authors compose and use literary devices. When reading text appropriate to fourth grade, they should be able to judge text critically and, in general, give thorough answers that indicate careful thought.

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FIGURE 6B

Levels of Reading Achievement at Grade 8

BASIC LEVEL (243)	Eighth-grade students performing at the Basic level should demonstrate a literal understanding of what they read and be able to make some interpretations. When reading text appropriate to eighth grade, they should be able to identify specific aspects of the text that reflect the overall meaning, extend the ideas in the text by making simple inferences, recognize and relate interpretations and connections among ideas in the text to personal experience, and draw conclusions based on the text.
PROFICIENT LEVEL (281)	Eighth-grade students performing at the Proficient level should be able to show an overall understanding of the text, including inferential as well as literal information. When reading text appropriate to eighth grade, they should be able to extend the ideas in the text by making clear inferences from it, by drawing conclusions, and by making connections to their own experiences—including other reading experiences. Proficient eighth graders should be able to identify some of the devices authors use in composing text.
ADVANCED LEVEL (323)	Eighth-grade students performing at the Advanced level should be able to describe the more abstract themes and ideas of the overall text. When reading text appropriate to eighth grade, they should be able to analyze both meaning and form and support their analyses explicitly with examples from the text; they should be able to extend text information by relating it to their experiences and to world events. At this level, student responses should be thorough, thoughtful, and extensive.

Who Was Assessed?

Selection of Schools and Students

For the NAEP state assessment, participating schools within a given jurisdiction, and students in those schools, were selected using probability sampling methods. These methods are described in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*.

Arkansas's Participation

The overall participation rate for schools and students must meet guidelines established by NCES and NAGB in order for assessment results to be reported publicly. The NAEP state assessment in reading was administered in public schools at grade 4 in 1992, in public and nonpublic schools at grade 4 in 1994, and in public and nonpublic schools at grades 4 and 8 in 1998. Arkansas participated in the NAEP reading assessments in 1992, 1994, and 1998 at grade 4, and met the minimum guidelines for publication of its public school results in all years. Arkansas satisfied the criteria for reporting grade 4 nonpublic school results in 1994 but not in 1998. In 1998 at grade 8, Arkansas met the criteria for reporting both public and nonpublic school results. Details on participation rates and guidelines for all participating jurisdictions can be found in Appendix A of the *Reading Report Card*.

Possible Sources of Bias in Reported Results

Within a certain state sample that meets the guidelines for publication of results, there still may exist possible sources of bias of the results due to nonparticipation of selected schools or due to nonparticipation of certain student groups. These possible sources of bias are indicated by notations and are specified and described in Appendix A of the *Reading Report Card*. Arkansas's public schools did not receive any notations to indicate the possibility of bias.

Participation by Students with Disabilities or Who Are Learning English

NAEP endeavors to assess all students selected in the randomized sampling process including students with disabilities (SD) as well as students who are beginning to learn English and are classified by their schools as limited English proficient (LEP). Although the guidelines used to classify students into these two categories vary from state to state, NAEP criteria for inclusion standardize the selection of students. The recent Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) should bring further consistency to classification criteria. The percentages of students classified as SD or LEP in all participating states and jurisdictions are available at the NAEP Web site in the all-jurisdiction summary data tables (SDTs). Participation guidelines specify levels of SD/LEP student nonparticipation that put the sample at risk for nonresponse bias; however, no jurisdiction failed to meet these guidelines for the 1998 reading assessment.

NAEP offers certain accommodations for SD or LEP students who need them (for example, large print test booklets or extended time), as described in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* and in a special report to follow. However, school personnel make the ultimate decision as to whether or not a particular student should take the assessment and whether accommodations are needed. The following table shows the percentage of students in Arkansas who were classified as SD or LEP in 1998 and also the percentage of those students who were excluded from NAEP at the discretion of school personnel.

Students in Arkansas who are classified as limited English proficient (LEP) or having disabilities, 1998

Percentage of students who are:	*School Type*	
	Public	Nonpublic
Grade 4		
Classified as LEP	1%	---
Excluded from the assessment due to LEP	1%	---
Classified as students with disabilities	10%	---
Excluded from the assessment due to disability	4%	---
Grade 8		
Classified as LEP	1%	0%
Excluded from the assessment due to LEP	1%	0%
Classified as students with disabilities	11%	4%
Excluded from the assessment due to disability	6%	4%

--- Nonpublic schools did not participate or minimum participation guidelines were not met.
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

How Are Performance Differences Reported?

Because the percentages of students and the average reading scale scores presented in this report are based on samples—rather than on the entire population of fourth or eighth graders in a jurisdiction—the numbers reported are necessarily *estimates*. As such, they are subject to sampling error, a measure of uncertainty reflected in the *standard error*[5] of the estimate. When the percentages or average scale scores of certain groups are compared, it is essential to take the standard error into account rather than to rely solely on observed similarities or differences. The comparisons discussed in this report are based on statistical tests that consider both the magnitude of the differences between the averages or percentages and the standard errors of those statistics.

The statistical tests determine whether the evidence—based on the data from the groups in the sample—is strong enough to conclude that there is an actual difference in the averages or percentages for those groups in the population. If the evidence is strong (i.e., the difference is statistically significant), the report describes the group averages or percentages as being different (e.g., one group performed *higher than* or *lower than* another group) regardless of whether the sample averages or percentages appear to be about the same or not. If the evidence is not sufficiently strong (i.e., the difference is not statistically significant), the averages or percentages are described as being *not significantly different*—again, regardless of whether the sample averages or sample percentages appear to be about the same or widely discrepant.

In this report, statements that compare groups or years by using terms such as "higher" or "no significant difference" (e.g., "females scored higher than males" or "scores in 1998 were not significantly different from 1994") are based on the results of statistical tests. Change over time that is statistically significant is indicated in the tables. The reader is cautioned to rely on the results of the statistical tests (as expressed in the bulleted text or as indicated in the tables) rather than on the apparent magnitude of any difference in scale scores or percentages in making inferences from the data. The statistical tests are discussed in greater detail in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* and the forthcoming *NAEP 1998 Technical Report*.

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[5] Standard errors measure the uncertainty that another sample drawn from the same population could have yielded somewhat different results.

SECTION 2 Overall Reading Performance and Performance by Demographic Characteristics

Since its inception in 1969, NAEP's mission has been to collect, analyze, and produce valid and reliable information about the academic performance of students in the United States in various learning areas. In 1990, the mission of NAEP was expanded to provide state-by-state results on academic achievement. To provide reports with each state's data, the computer-generated reporting system was developed; this report was produced using that system.

From 1990 through 1996, NAEP provided state reports with a variety of variables chosen for their general interest to most states. Because of new Internet capabilities, and with the approval of the state NAEP representatives, the 1998 state reports are tailored to provide information of most immediate need to all states. Consequently, results are reported here by total population and broken out by major demographic variables only. State NAEP results on the Internet provide resources for customized reports not possible in the past.

Reported in this section are the results for student performance overall as well as disaggregated by the main demographic variables usually reported by NAEP:

- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Highest level of parental education (grade 8 only)
- Eligibility for the free or reduced-price school lunch program
- Type of school location (where applicable)
- Type of school (public compared to nonpublic, where available)

Each of these variables is reported first by average scale score and selected percentiles and then by percentages of students at or above each achievement level.

The reader is cautioned against making inferences about the performance of students in these groups, or about the effectiveness of the National School Lunch Program or types of school control, because there are generally many other factors involved that are not discussed here and possibly not addressed by NAEP.

Students' Overall Scale Scores

Table 1A shows the overall performance of Arkansas's public school students, as well as the overall performance for the Southeast region and the nation. The first column of results gives the average scale score on the NAEP 0–500 reading scale.

The columns to the right show the score at each of the selected percentiles. This arrangement permits a more detailed view of performance along the distribution of lowest to highest scores, with the score at each percentile as a demarcation point—for each percentile, that percentage of scores falls below the score at that percentile. For instance, 75 percent of the student scores fall below the score shown at the 75th percentile. If, for a particular jurisdiction, the score at the 75th percentile is equal to the national average, 25 percent of its students performed better than the national average. A jurisdiction might also compare the score at its 25th percentile for the current year to that of a previous year to see what change has occurred for students who scored in the lower quartile.

In terms of the average NAEP reading scale score for Arkansas's public school students, Table 1A shows the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, the average reading scale score for students in Arkansas was 209. This was lower than that of fourth graders in public schools across the nation (215).
- In Arkansas, the average scale score of students was not significantly different in 1998 (209) from that in 1992 (211). Similarly, the average scale score of fourth graders across the nation was not significantly different in 1998 (215) from that in 1992 (215).
- In Arkansas, the average scale score of students was not significantly different in 1998 (209) from that in 1994 (209). However, the average scale score of fourth graders across the nation was higher in 1998 (215) than in 1994 (212).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In 1998, the average scale score of students in Arkansas was 256, lower than that of eighth graders in public schools nationwide (261).

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TABLE 1A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for public school students: 1992 to 1998

		Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Grade 4							
1998	Arkansas	209 (1.5)	158 (3.3)	186 (1.9)	212 (1.5)	236 (1.8)	255 (1.3)
	Southeast	210 (1.4)	159 (3.0)	185 (2.3)	212 (1.5)	236 (1.4)	256 (3.1)
	Nation	215 (0.8)>	165 (2.2)>	192 (1.1)>	218 (0.9)	242 (1.0)	261 (1.3)
1994	Arkansas	209 (1.7)	156 (2.8)	184 (2.8)	212 (1.9)	237 (1.2)	256 (1.6)
	Southeast	208 (2.0)	154 (3.4)	181 (3.0)	211 (2.8)	236 (2.9)	257 (1.9)
	Nation	212 (1.1)	156 (2.1)	187 (1.5)	217 (1.2)	241 (1.2)	261 (1.5)
1992	Arkansas	211 (1.2)	165 (2.0)	188 (1.4)	213 (1.5)	236 (1.1)	254 (1.6)
	Southeast	211 (2.5)	163 (3.5)	187 (3.5)	213 (3.6)	235 (2.7)	254 (4.1)
	Nation	215 (1.0)	168 (1.9)	192 (1.0)	217 (1.7)	240 (1.3)	259 (2.3)
Grade 8							
1998	Arkansas	256 (1.3)	210 (4.0)	236 (1.7)	259 (1.4)	279 (1.2)	296 (1.5)
	Southeast	258 (1.7)	214 (2.6)	236 (1.6)	260 (2.2)	281 (1.7)	299 (1.5)
	Nation	261 (0.8)	215 (1.6)	239 (1.3)	264 (1.1)	286 (0.8)	304 (1.2)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation +(–) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

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Overall Results in Terms of Achievement Levels

Table 1B presents the percentages of students who performed below *Basic*, at or above *Basic*, at or above *Proficient*, and at *Advanced* levels. Because the percentages in the levels are cumulative from *Basic* to *Proficient* to *Advanced*, they sum to more than 100 percent. Only the percentage of students at or above *Basic* (which includes *Proficient* and *Advanced*) plus the percentage of students below *Basic* will always sum to 100 percent.

Table 1B indicates the following in terms of achievement levels attained by Arkansas's public school students.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, the percentage of Arkansas students who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was 23 percent. This was smaller than the percentage of the nation's public school students who performed at the same level (29 percent).
- The percentage of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 (23 percent) from that in 1992 (23 percent).
- The percentage of students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 (23 percent) from that in 1994 (24 percent).
- The percentage of students in Arkansas who performed at or above the *Basic* level in 1998 (55 percent) was smaller than that for the nation's public school students (61 percent).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- The percentage of students in Arkansas who performed at or above the *Proficient* level in 1998 was 23 percent. This percentage was smaller than that of public school students across the nation (31 percent).
- In 1998, the percentage of students who performed at or above the *Basic* level in Arkansas was 68 percent. This percentage did not differ significantly from that of public school students nationwide (72 percent).

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TABLE 1B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels: 1992 to 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	45 (1.9)	55 (1.9)	23 (1.6)	4 (0.6)
	Southeast	46 (1.6)	54 (1.6)	23 (1.5)	5 (0.8)
	Nation	39 (1.0)	61 (1.0)	29 (0.9)	6 (0.5)
1994	Arkansas	46 (1.8)	54 (1.8)	24 (1.4)	5 (0.6)
	Southeast	47 (2.4)	53 (2.4)	23 (2.1)	6 (0.6)
	Nation	41 (1.1)	59 (1.1)	28 (1.2)	7 (0.7)
1992	Arkansas	44 (1.5)	56 (1.5)	23 (1.2)	4 (0.6)
	Southeast	45 (3.5)	55 (3.5)	22 (2.6)	4 (0.8)
	Nation	40 (1.1)	60 (1.1)	27 (1.3)	6 (0.6)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	32 (1.7)	68 (1.7)	23 (1.3)	1 (0.4)
	Southeast	32 (2.1)	68 (2.1)	25 (1.9)	2 (0.4)
	Nation	28 (0.9)	72 (0.9)	31 (0.9)	2 (0.4)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280); *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322); and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation »(«) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Gender

This report focuses on trend differences, for example, whether females' performance has improved since 1994 or 1992. The indicators of significant differences that appear in the tables come from a comparison of performance by males or females over time. Another issue covered in many studies and by comparisons below (but not in the tables) is that of differences in performance between males and females. Several studies show that females outperform males in development of literacy at the elementary and middle school grades; reports documenting or surveying gender differences in reading include *NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress*[7] and *The Condition of Education*.

Table 2A shows scale scores for public school fourth and eighth graders by gender in Arkansas, the Southeast region, and the nation.

Scale Score Results by Gender

In terms of average reading scale scores for Arkansas's public school students, Table 2A shows the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In Arkansas, male students' average scale score was 206 in 1998. This was lower than that of females (212).
- In 1998, male students in Arkansas had an average scale score in reading (206) that was lower than that of fourth-grade males across the nation (212). Similarly, females in Arkansas had an average score (212) that was lower than that of females nationwide (218).
- The average reading scale score of Arkansas's fourth-grade males did not differ significantly in 1998 (206) from that in 1992 (208). Similarly, the average scale score of female students did not differ significantly in 1998 (212) from that in 1992 (214).
- The average reading scale score of Arkansas's fourth-grade males did not differ significantly in 1998 (206) from that in 1994 (204). Similarly, the average scale score of female students did not differ significantly in 1998 (212) from that in 1994 (213).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In 1998 in Arkansas, male students' average scale score was 250. This was lower than that of females (262).
- The average reading scale score of males in Arkansas (250) was lower than that of males across the nation (255) in 1998. Similarly, Arkansas females' average scale score (262) was lower than that of females nationwide (268).

[7] Campbell, J., Voelkl, K., & Donahue, P. (1997). *NAEP 1996 trends in academic progress* (NCES Publication No. 97-985). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

[8] For instance, see Indicator 20: U.S. Department of Education. (1996). *The condition of education 1996* (NCES Publication No. 96-304). Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

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TABLE 2A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for public school students by gender: 1992 to 1998

	Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Males							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	50 (0.9)	206 (1.8)	154 (3.5)	182 (3.4)	209 (1.7)	235 (1.8)	254 (2.6)
Southeast	47 (1.3)<	207 (2.0)	155 (3.5)	181 (2.4)	208 (2.3)	234 (2.1)	254 (4.6)
Nation	50 (0.7)	212 (1.2)>	161 (2.8)>	188 (1.3)>	215 (1.1)	240 (1.9)	259 (1.4)
1994 Arkansas	50 (1.3)	204 (1.9)	152 (3.5)	179 (2.2)	207 (2.1)	233 (1.4)	252 (1.9)
Southeast	52 (1.8)	202 (2.5)	145 (3.3)	174 (2.9)	204 (2.3)	231 (3.2)	254 (4.2)
Nation	51 (0.7)	207 (1.3)	149 (1.8)	181 (1.0)	211 (1.8)	237 (1.2)	257 (1.9)
1992 Arkansas	50 (1.0)	208 (1.5)	160 (2.3)	185 (1.7)	210 (1.5)	233 (1.0)	251 (2.5)
Southeast	49 (1.3)	205 (2.9)	154 (4.3)	179 (4.1)	206 (3.5)	231 (4.3)	250 (3.9)
Nation	51 (0.7)	211 (1.3)	163 (2.1)	188 (1.9)	213 (1.4)	237 (2.0)	256 (2.4)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	51 (1.1)	250 (1.7)	203 (5.4)	230 (1.6)	254 (2.2)	274 (2.2)	291 (1.8)
Southeast	50 (1.1)<	251 (1.9)	208 (2.3)	228 (2.4)	252 (2.4)	274 (2.0)	291 (1.1)
Nation	51 (0.5)	255 (1.0)	207 (2.4)	232 (1.7)	257 (1.0)	280 (0.9)	297 (1.3)
Females							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	50 (0.9)	212 (1.7)	163 (5.7)	189 (2.6)	215 (1.6)	237 (1.6)	256 (2.3)
Southeast	53 (1.3)>	212 (1.3)	164 (2.3)	189 (2.1)	214 (1.8)	238 (1.2)	257 (3.1)
Nation	50 (0.7)	218 (0.8)	170 (1.7)	195 (1.5)	221 (1.0)	244 (1.2)	263 (1.1)
1994 Arkansas	50 (1.3)	213 (1.8)	161 (5.8)	190 (2.3)	216 (1.5)	240 (1.4)	260 (1.9)
Southeast	48 (1.8)	215 (2.2)	165 (2.4)	189 (2.1)	217 (2.5)	240 (3.5)	261 (2.7)
Nation	49 (0.7)	218 (1.2)	165 (1.6)	194 (2.0)	222 (2.3)	245 (1.4)	264 (2.1)
1992 Arkansas	50 (1.0)	214 (1.4)	169 (1.5)	191 (1.4)	216 (1.8)	239 (1.9)	257 (2.7)
Southeast	51 (1.3)	216 (2.5)	175 (3.8)	194 (3.4)	218 (2.8)	238 (3.9)	258 (4.3)
Nation	49 (0.7)	219 (1.1)	173 (2.1)	197 (2.0)	221 (1.1)	243 (1.6)	262 (1.7)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	49 (1.1)	262 (1.6)	219 (1.8)	242 (1.9)	265 (1.9)	284 (1.5)	300 (1.3)
Southeast	50 (1.1)	265 (1.6)	223 (2.8)	244 (2.6)	267 (2.1)	287 (2.2)	305 (2.5)
Nation	49 (0.5)	268 (1.0)	225 (1.6)	248 (1.1)	271 (1.2)	291 (1.4)	308 (1.5)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation »(«) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Achievement Level Results by Gender

As shown in Table 2B, the following is true of achievement levels attained by Arkansas's public school students.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, 22 percent of males and 24 percent of females performed at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas. These percentages were not significantly different.
- The percentage of males in Arkansas who were at or above the *Proficient* level in 1998 (22 percent) was smaller than that of males in the nation (27 percent).
- The percentage of females in Arkansas at or above this level in 1998 (24 percent) was smaller than that of the nation's females (31 percent).
- The percentages of both males and females performing at or above the *Proficient* level were not significantly different in 1998 from those in 1992.
- The percentages of both males and females performing at or above the *Proficient* level were not significantly different in 1998 from those in 1994.

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In 1998, 18 percent of males and 28 percent of females in Arkansas performed at or above the *Proficient* level. These percentages were significantly different.
- In 1998, the percentage of males at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas (18 percent) was smaller than that of males in the nation (24 percent).
- The percentage of females in Arkansas performing at or above the *Proficient* level in 1998 (28 percent) was smaller than that of females nationwide (37 percent).

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TABLE 2B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels by gender: 1992 to 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Males					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	49 (2.3)	51 (2.3)	22 (1.9)	4 (0.8)
	Southeast	49 (2.7)	51 (2.7)	21 (2.0)	4 (0.8)
	Nation	43 (1.5)	57 (1.5)	27 (1.3)	6 (0.7)
1994	Arkansas	51 (1.8)	49 (1.8)	21 (1.6)	3 (0.7)
	Southeast	54 (2.8)	46 (2.8)	20 (2.3)	4 (0.9)
	Nation	47 (1.5)	53 (1.5)	24 (1.3)	6 (0.8)
1992	Arkansas	48 (2.1)	52 (2.1)	20 (1.3)	3 (0.6)
	Southeast	52 (4.0)	48 (4.0)	18 (2.4)	3 (0.8)
	Nation	44 (1.7)	56 (1.7)	24 (1.5)	5 (0.7)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	38 (2.3)	62 (2.3)	18 (2.1)	1 (0.4)
	Southeast	40 (2.5)	60 (2.5)	18 (1.7)	1 (0.4)
	Nation	35 (1.2)	65 (1.2)	24 (1.0)	1 (0.3)
Females					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	42 (2.0)	58 (2.0)	24 (1.7)	4 (0.8)
	Southeast	43 (1.6)	57 (1.6)	25 (1.5)	5 (0.9)
	Nation	36 (1.1)	64 (1.1)	31 (1.1)	7 (0.6)
1994	Arkansas	42 (2.0)	58 (2.0)	27 (1.7)	6 (0.7)
	Southeast	41 (3.0)	59 (3.0)	27 (3.1)	7 (1.0)
	Nation	36 (1.3)	64 (1.3)	32 (1.6)	8 (0.9)
1992	Arkansas	41 (1.9)	59 (1.9)	25 (1.8)	4 (0.8)
	Southeast	38 (3.8)	62 (3.8)	25 (3.2)	5 (1.2)
	Nation	35 (1.5)	65 (1.5)	30 (1.5)	7 (0.9)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	26 (1.9)	74 (1.9)	28 (2.0)	2 (0.6)
	Southeast	24 (2.3)	76 (2.3)	32 (2.5)	3 (0.7)
	Nation	21 (0.9)	79 (0.9)	37 (1.3)	3 (0.6)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280); *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322); and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation »(«) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Race/Ethnicity

As part of the background questionnaire administered with the assessment, students were asked to identify the racial/ethnic subgroup that best described them. The five mutually exclusive categories were White, Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, and American Indian. This information was the primary contributor to the classifications appearing below. For details of the derivation of this variable, see the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*.

Table 3A shows scale scores for public school students by racial and ethnic background in Arkansas, the Southeast region, and the nation. Only the race/ethnicity categories with sufficient membership to meet reporting requirements in Arkansas are reported.

Scale Score Results by Race/Ethnicity

In terms of average reading scale scores for Arkansas's public school students, Table 3A indicates the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, White students in Arkansas had an average scale score that was higher than those of Black and Hispanic students.
- The average scale score of White, Black, and Hispanic students in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 from in 1992.
- The average scale score of White, Black, and Hispanic students in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 from in 1994.

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In 1998, White students in Arkansas had an average scale score that was higher than those of Black and Hispanic students.

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TABLE 3A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for public school students by race/ethnicity: 1992 to 1998

		Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
				10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
White								
Grade 4								
1998	Arkansas	70 (1.9)	218 (1.3)	172 (1.5)	197 (1.4)	221 (1.3)	242 (1.7)	259 (1.6)
	Southeast	64 (2.3)	220 (2.1)	174 (5.1)	198 (1.5)	222 (3.3)	244 (2.4)	262 (3.1)
	Nation	66 (0.6)<«	225 (0.9)	181 (3.2)	204 (1.7)	228 (0.8)	249 (1.2)	266 (1.2)
1994	Arkansas	70 (1.7)	218 (1.7)	171 (4.0)	196 (2.1)	221 (1.8)	243 (1.7)	261 (2.6)
	Southeast	63 (3.6)	219 (2.4)	170 (4.7)	196 (3.5)	222 (3.7)	244 (2.2)	264 (4.0)
	Nation	68 (0.5)	223 (1.3)	175 (2.3)	201 (1.7)	226 (1.4)	247 (1.1)	266 (2.4)
1992	Arkansas	70 (1.8)	219 (1.1)	177 (2.1)	199 (1.2)	221 (1.2)	242 (1.9)	259 (1.5)
	Southeast	63 (2.7)	220 (3.4)	177 (3.7)	199 (4.2)	222 (3.9)	242 (3.2)	261 (4.1)
	Nation	69 (0.5)	223 (1.3)	180 (2.3)	202 (1.4)	225 (1.6)	246 (1.3)	264 (1.6)
Grade 8								
1998	Arkansas	73 (1.6)	263 (1.4)	224 (2.1)	245 (2.2)	266 (1.2)	284 (1.2)	300 (1.1)
	Southeast	67 (2.6)	265 (1.9)	223 (2.5)	244 (2.4)	266 (2.9)	286 (2.1)	304 (2.4)
	Nation	66 (0.5)	270 (0.9)	228 (2.3)	250 (0.9)	272 (1.2)	291 (0.9)	308 (1.3)
Black								
Grade 4								
1998	Arkansas	21 (1.6)	186 (2.4)	138 (7.0)	163 (3.2)	187 (2.9)	210 (5.1)	231 (3.3)
	Southeast	26 (2.2)	190 (2.6)	142 (4.6)	167 (5.1)	190 (2.2)	214 (2.5)	234 (2.8)
	Nation	16 (0.4)	193 (1.8)>	145 (5.1)	170 (5.0)	195 (2.0)	218 (2.2)	237 (1.8)
1994	Arkansas	21 (1.6)	183 (2.3)	135 (4.2)	158 (3.6)	185 (2.7)	209 (2.9)	229 (2.3)
	Southeast	26 (2.9)	188 (2.5)	139 (2.1)	163 (2.8)	189 (3.6)	215 (2.9)	236 (4.2)
	Nation	16 (0.4)	186 (1.7)	135 (3.1)	160 (1.9)	187 (1.9)	213 (2.2)	234 (2.3)
1992	Arkansas	21 (1.5)	190 (1.7)	148 (4.0)	170 (3.6)	191 (2.6)	212 (1.9)	231 (2.2)
	Southeast	29 (2.6)	194 (2.4)	150 (7.2)	172 (2.9)	195 (3.4)	216 (3.1)	237 (4.6)
	Nation	17 (0.4)	192 (1.6)	148 (3.5)	169 (3.0)	193 (2.0)	215 (2.6)	235 (2.2)
Grade 8								
1998	Arkansas	21 (1.5)	235 (2.1)	192 (3.5)	215 (4.1)	237 (3.0)	257 (2.0)	273 (2.8)
	Southeast	25 (2.5)	243 (2.5)	202 (2.4)	221 (2.9)	243 (4.0)	265 (3.3)	282 (3.7)
	Nation	15 (0.3)	241 (1.6)	200 (2.2)	220 (1.8)	243 (2.0)	265 (2.2)	283 (1.7)
Hispanic								
Grade 4								
1998	Arkansas	6 (0.7)	187 (5.3)	130 (9.7)	161 (17.3)	192 (2.3)	216 (5.4)	237 (3.9)
	Southeast	7 (1.1)	191 (4.0)	140 (4.6)	162 (5.4)	193 (3.5)	219 (4.6)	243 (5.3)
	Nation	14 (0.5)>«	195 (1.9)	145 (2.7)	170 (3.0)	196 (2.2)	222 (2.0)	242 (2.4)
1994	Arkansas	6 (0.7)	192 (4.2)	138 (13.4)	163 (9.3)	193 (4.1)	222 (4.4)	246 (13.8)
	Southeast	8 (1.2)	184 (4.1)	137 (7.5)	157 (4.7)	182 (5.3)	211 (4.3)	235 (9.4)
	Nation	12 (0.3)	188 (2.7)	134 (4.7)	160 (3.5)	189 (4.2)	217 (3.5)	242 (3.6)
1992	Arkansas	7 (0.7)	188 (3.8)	137 (7.2)	163 (12.0)	188 (6.1)	216 (8.3)	235 (4.0)
	Southeast	5 (1.1)	194 (5.0)!	141 (25.9)!	167 (7.5)!	196 (4.4)!	223 (3.7)!	241 (6.2)!
	Nation	10 (0.3)	199 (2.2)	151 (4.2)	175 (2.4)	200 (3.7)	225 (3.9)	245 (2.4)
Grade 8								
1998	Arkansas	3 (0.4)	230 (5.8)	177 (11.7)	201 (8.0)	235 (13.6)	261 (9.4)	280 (14.6)
	Southeast	6 (0.9)	245 (2.7)	201 (3.5)	222 (7.4)	245 (2.9)	268 (5.1)	285 (3.7)
	Nation	14 (0.3)	243 (2.1)	195 (6.4)	221 (3.9)	245 (2.7)	268 (1.5)	286 (2.0)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation »(«) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. ! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Achievement Level Results by Race/Ethnicity

Table 3B shows the following to be true of achievement levels attained by Arkansas's public school students.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In Arkansas in 1998, the percentage of White students performing at or above the *Proficient* level was greater than those of Black and Hispanic students.
- The respective percentages of White, Black, and Hispanic students in Arkansas performing at or above the *Proficient* level did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1992.
- The respective percentages of White, Black, and Hispanic students in Arkansas performing at or above the *Proficient* level did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1994.

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In Arkansas, the percentage of White students performing at or above the *Proficient* level in 1998 was greater than those of Black and Hispanic students.

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TABLE 3B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels by race/ethnicity: 1992 to 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
White					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	35 (1.9)	65 (1.9)	29 (1.9)	5 (0.8)
	Southeast	34 (2.8)	66 (2.8)	31 (2.6)	7 (1.2)
	Nation	28 (1.2)	72 (1.2)	38 (1.2)	9 (0.7)
1994	Arkansas	36 (1.8)	64 (1.8)	30 (1.7)	6 (0.9)
	Southeast	35 (2.2)	65 (2.2)	31 (2.9)	8 (0.8)
	Nation	31 (1.3)	69 (1.3)	35 (1.5)	9 (0.9)
1992	Arkansas	34 (1.5)	66 (1.5)	29 (1.5)	5 (0.8)
	Southeast	33 (4.8)	67 (4.8)	29 (3.9)	6 (1.1)
	Nation	30 (1.5)	70 (1.5)	33 (1.9)	8 (1.0)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	23 (1.7)	77 (1.7)	29 (1.6)	2 (0.6)
	Southeast	24 (2.2)	76 (2.2)	31 (2.6)	2 (0.6)
	Nation	19 (0.9)	81 (0.9)	38 (1.2)	3 (0.6)
Black					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	73 (3.1)	27 (3.1)	7 (1.4)	1 (0.5)
	Southeast	69 (2.5)	31 (2.5)	8 (1.3)	1 (****)
	Nation	65 (1.9)	35 (1.9)	9 (1.0)	1 (0.5)
1994	Arkansas	75 (2.1)	25 (2.1)	6 (1.2)	0 (****)
	Southeast	68 (4.3)	32 (4.3)	9 (1.7)	1 (0.6)
	Nation	70 (2.5)	30 (2.5)	8 (0.9)	1 (0.4)
1992	Arkansas	71 (2.0)	29 (2.0)	6 (1.1)	0 (****)
	Southeast	66 (3.9)	34 (3.9)	9 (2.2)	1 (****)
	Nation	68 (2.1)	32 (2.1)	8 (1.4)	1 (****)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	58 (3.1)	42 (3.1)	6 (1.6)	0 (****)
	Southeast	50 (3.7)	50 (3.7)	11 (2.0)	0 (****)
	Nation	50 (2.5)	50 (2.5)	11 (1.3)	0 (****)
Hispanic					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	66 (4.6)	34 (4.6)	10 (3.5)	1 (****)
	Southeast	66 (4.5)	34 (4.5)	12 (3.8)	2 (0.9)
	Nation	62 (2.0)	38 (2.0)	12 (1.3)	2 (0.4)
1994	Arkansas	64 (5.7)	36 (5.7)	14 (3.3)	3 (1.7)
	Southeast	74 (4.3)	26 (4.3)	8 (2.5)	1 (****)
	Nation	67 (2.6)	33 (2.6)	12 (1.6)	2 (0.7)
1992	Arkansas	69 (5.2)	31 (5.2)	8 (2.9)	0 (****)
	Southeast	61 (4.9)!	39 (4.9)!	12 (2.9)!	1 (****)!
	Nation	58 (2.1)	42 (2.1)	14 (1.8)	2 (1.0)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	59 (7.1)	41 (7.1)	11 (4.9)	0 (****)
	Southeast	47 (4.6)	53 (4.6)	13 (4.0)	1 (****)
	Nation	48 (2.5)	52 (2.5)	14 (1.3)	0 (0.2)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280); *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322); and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation »(«) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. ! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic. **** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Students' Reports of Parents' Highest Education Level

As part of the background questionnaire administered with the assessment, students were asked to identify the highest level of education completed by each parent. The groupings were determined by the highest educational level reported for either parent.

Level of parental education has always exhibited the same general pattern in NAEP reports: the higher the level of parental education, the higher the level of student performance. This finding is borne out by other studies; for instance, see a paper by Grissmer, Kirby, Berends, and Williamson (1994) that includes findings from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) and the National Education Longitudinal Study (NELS).[7]

Table 4A shows scale scores for public school students by parents' highest education level in Arkansas, the Southeast region, and the nation. Because the format for the question was changed for grade 4, only grade 8 results are reported. The format change is described in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*.

Scale Score Results by Parents' Education

In terms of average reading scale scores for Arkansas's eighth-grade public school students in 1998, Table 4A indicates the following. (Note that the following discussion pertains only to those students who reported knowing the highest level of education achieved by one or both parents.)

Public School Students, Grade 8

- Students in Arkansas who affirmed that neither parent graduated from high school had an average reading scale score that was not significantly different from that of students reporting that at least one parent graduated from high school but was lower than those of students reporting that at least one parent had some education after high school or at least one parent graduated from college.
- The average scale score for students reporting that at least one parent graduated from college in Arkansas was lower than that of similar students nationwide. The average scale score for students reporting that neither parent graduated from high school, at least one parent graduated from high school, or at least one parent had some education after high school in Arkansas was not significantly different from that of similar students nationwide.

[7] Grissmer, D. W., Kirby, S. N., Berends, M., and Williamson, S. (1994). *Student achievement and the changing American family* (Publication No. MR-488-LE). Santa Monica, CA: RAND.

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TABLE 4A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for public school students by parents' highest level of education: 1998

	Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Did not finish high school							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	8 (0.5)	243 (3.1)	198 (10.1)	225 (6.0)	246 (7.8)	267 (1.3)	283 (4.0)
Southeast	9 (0.7)	242 (2.4)	203 (5.3)	221 (5.2)	241 (2.3)	264 (4.5)	280 (4.8)
Nation	8 (0.4)	242 (1.9)	200 (1.9)	221 (4.0)	244 (3.4)	266 (3.4)	283 (2.7)
Graduated from high school							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	24 (1.0)	249 (1.9)	203 (4.8)	229 (2.7)	253 (1.7)	274 (2.9)	291 (2.8)
Southeast	27 (0.8)	252 (1.9)	213 (2.8)	232 (2.7)	254 (2.6)	274 (1.9)	290 (3.5)
Nation	23 (0.6)	253 (1.3)	209 (3.2)	231 (2.5)	255 (1.7)	277 (1.4)	294 (3.3)
Some education after high school							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	21 (0.7)	265 (2.4)	230 (3.7)	248 (3.7)	267 (1.9)	284 (1.9)	300 (3.9)
Southeast	18 (0.9)	264 (3.0)	221 (3.1)	244 (2.5)	267 (2.3)	285 (2.4)	303 (8.6)
Nation	18 (0.5)	268 (1.4)	227 (3.2)	249 (1.5)	270 (1.9)	288 (1.4)	306 (2.1)
Graduated from college							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	31 (1.3)	264 (1.7)	221 (3.0)	245 (1.7)	267 (1.2)	287 (1.5)	302 (2.0)
Southeast	38 (1.2)	265 (1.9)	222 (3.9)	244 (3.6)	267 (4.2)	289 (1.9)	307 (2.8)
Nation	42 (0.9)	272 (1.0)	229 (1.7)	252 (0.9)	275 (1.0)	294 (1.3)	311 (1.8)
I don't know.							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	15 (0.8)	241 (2.6)	192 (9.0)	220 (3.9)	246 (3.9)	267 (1.8)	283 (8.6)
Southeast	8 (0.8)	245 (3.3)	203 (2.5)	223 (4.7)	245 (3.7)	268 (3.0)	285 (4.0)
Nation	10 (0.4)	241 (2.0)	195 (2.2)	219 (2.7)	242 (0.9)	266 (2.4)	283 (1.6)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses.
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Achievement Level Results by Parents' Education

In terms of achievement levels attained by Arkansas's eighth-grade public school students in 1998, Table 4B shows the following. (As with the previous discussion regarding average scale scores, the following pertains only to those students who reported knowing the highest level of education achieved by at least one parent.)

Public School Students, Grade 8

- The percentage of students in Arkansas reporting that neither parent graduated from high school who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was not significantly different from the corresponding percentage for students reporting that at least one parent graduated from high school but was smaller than those of students reporting that at least one parent had some education after high school or that at least one parent graduated from college.
- For students reporting that at least one parent graduated from college, the percentage who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was smaller in Arkansas than across the nation. For students reporting that neither parent graduated from high school, at least one parent graduated from high school, or at least one parent had some education after high school, the percentage who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was not significantly different in Arkansas from that of similar students across the nation.

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TABLE 4B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels by parents' highest level of education: 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Did not finish high school					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	46 (4.2)	54 (4.2)	12 (2.7)	0 (****)
	Southeast	53 (3.9)	47 (3.9)	9 (2.1)	0 (****)
	Nation	49 (2.5)	51 (2.5)	11 (1.5)	0 (****)
Graduated from high school					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	39 (2.5)	61 (2.5)	18 (2.2)	0 (****)
	Southeast	37 (3.0)	63 (3.0)	18 (3.0)	0 (****)
	Nation	36 (2.1)	64 (2.1)	21 (1.3)	1 (0.4)
Some education after HS					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	20 (3.5)	80 (3.5)	29 (2.9)	2 (0.7)
	Southeast	24 (3.5)	76 (3.5)	30 (5.0)	2 (0.9)
	Nation	20 (1.6)	80 (1.6)	35 (2.1)	2 (0.7)
Graduated from college					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	23 (2.1)	77 (2.1)	32 (2.3)	2 (1.0)
	Southeast	24 (2.7)	76 (2.7)	33 (2.6)	3 (0.9)
	Nation	18 (1.0)	82 (1.0)	42 (1.5)	4 (0.7)
I don't know.					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	47 (3.6)	53 (3.6)	11 (2.4)	0 (****)
	Southeast	47 (5.0)	53 (5.0)	13 (3.3)	0 (****)
	Nation	51 (2.3)	49 (2.3)	12 (1.2)	0 (****)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 8: *Basic*, 243-280; *Proficient*, 281-322; and *Advanced*, 323 and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses.
**** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program Eligibility

NAEP tracks eligibility for the federal program providing free or reduced-price school lunches. The free/reduced-price lunch component of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) offered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), is designed to ensure that children near or below the poverty line receive nourishing meals. This program is available to public schools, nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions. Eligibility is determined through the USDA's Income Eligibility Guidelines, and results for this category of students are included as an indicator of poverty. More information is available at the USDA Web site, in particular, in a question-and-answer style document called "Nutrition Program Facts" at http://www.usda.gov/fcs/cnp/school†2.htm. NAEP first collected information on participation in this program in 1996.

NAEP collects data on student eligibility for the NSLP in five categories: eligible for reduced-price lunches, eligible for free lunches, not eligible for the NSLP, information was not available, or schools did not provide the information. Because some of these groups were small, these categories were combined into eligible, not eligible, and information not available, as reported here for groups meeting minimum sample size requirements.

Scale Score Results by Eligibility for the Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program

In terms of average reading scale scores for Arkansas's public school students in 1998, Table 5A shows the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- Students in Arkansas eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had an average reading scale score of 196. This was lower than that of students not eligible for this program (221).
- Students in Arkansas eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had an average scale score (196) that did not differ significantly from that of similar fourth-grade students in the nation (198).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In Arkansas, the average reading scale score of students eligible for free/reduced-price lunch was 242. This was lower than that of students not eligible for this program (264).
- Students in Arkansas eligible for free/reduced-price lunch had an average scale score (242) that did not differ significantly from that of similar eighth graders nationwide (246).

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TABLE 5A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles by free/reduced-price lunch eligibility: 1998

	Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Eligible							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	47 (2.1)	196 (1.9)	146 (4.6)	172 (2.8)	199 (2.2)	223 (1.7)	242 (2.0)
Southeast	46 (2.3)	196 (1.6)	146 (3.8)	173 (2.9)	198 (1.7)	222 (3.2)	242 (2.8)
Nation	38 (1.3)	198 (1.2)	150 (2.7)	175 (1.6)	200 (1.7)	224 (1.8)	243 (1.5)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	37 (1.6)	242 (1.7)	194 (4.3)	220 (3.5)	246 (1.7)	267 (1.2)	284 (2.1)
Southeast	35 (2.0)	247 (1.5)	206 (3.7)	226 (1.2)	248 (3.0)	268 (2.2)	285 (2.3)
Nation	30 (0.8)	246 (1.3)	201 (1.9)	224 (2.1)	248 (1.7)	270 (1.0)	288 (1.6)
Not eligible							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	49 (2.1)	221 (1.6)	176 (4.3)	201 (2.4)	224 (1.2)	245 (1.3)	262 (2.3)
Southeast	50 (2.5)	222 (2.0)	177 (3.5)	199 (2.3)	224 (2.9)	246 (2.7)	263 (2.9)
Nation	54 (1.9)	226 (1.0)	181 (1.7)	205 (1.5)	229 (1.1)	250 (1.0)	267 (1.1)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	59 (1.8)	264 (1.4)	224 (3.4)	245 (2.5)	267 (1.4)	284 (1.1)	300 (1.1)
Southeast	58 (2.8)	265 (1.8)	223 (2.2)	244 (2.4)	267 (2.7)	287 (1.6)	305 (2.3)
Nation	58 (1.8)	269 (1.0)	226 (1.4)	249 (1.1)	272 (1.0)	291 (1.1)	308 (1.4)
Information not available							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	4 (1.8)	213 (6.6)!	170 (8.1)!	189 (7.8)!	212 (8.0)!	238 (6.8)!	258 (7.4)!
Southeast	4 (1.1)	215 (6.0)!	169 (14.9)!	185 (7.1)!	219 (12.2)!	240 (11.0)!	258 (9.4)!
Nation	7 (1.9)	225 (4.0)!	177 (4.0)!	203 (6.0)!	227 (5.1)!	251 (4.7)!	268 (4.4)!
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	4 (1.3)	263 (8.4)!	221 (8.5)!	241 (10.4)!	265 (18.3)!	284 (6.1)!	302 (8.4)!
Southeast	7 (2.6)	256 (7.0)!	208 (9.4)!	231 (12.5)!	260 (6.4)!	280 (3.8)!	294 (5.7)!
Nation	12 (1.9)	265 (2.7)	216 (4.4)	243 (3.8)	269 (2.8)	290 (3.4)	307 (2.4)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses.
! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic.
SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Achievement Level Results by Eligibility for the Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program

In terms of achievement levels attained by public school students in 1998, Table 5B indicates the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In Arkansas, 13 percent of students who were eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program and 32 percent of students who were not eligible for this service performed at or above the *Proficient* level. These percentages were significantly different.
- For students in Arkansas who were eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program, the percentage at or above the *Proficient* level (13 percent) was not significantly different from the corresponding percentage for their national counterparts (13 percent).

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In Arkansas, 12 percent of students who were eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program and 29 percent of students who were not eligible performed at or above the *Proficient* level. These percentages were significantly different.
- For students who were eligible for the free/reduced-price lunch program, the percentage at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas (12 percent) was not significantly different from the corresponding percentage for eligible students nationwide (15 percent).

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TABLE 5B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels by free/reduced-price lunch eligibility: 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Eligible					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	59 (2.4)	41 (2.4)	13 (1.5)	1 (0.5)
	Southeast	61 (1.9)	39 (1.9)	12 (1.6)	2 (0.7)
	Nation	58 (1.5)	42 (1.5)	13 (1.2)	1 (0.4)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	47 (2.1)	53 (2.1)	12 (1.7)	0 (****)
	Southeast	44 (2.6)	56 (2.6)	13 (1.7)	0 (****)
	Nation	44 (1.6)	56 (1.6)	15 (1.0)	0 (****)
Not eligible					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	32 (2.2)	68 (2.2)	32 (2.3)	6 (1.0)
	Southeast	33 (2.5)	67 (2.5)	33 (2.5)	7 (1.5)
	Nation	28 (1.3)	72 (1.3)	39 (1.3)	10 (0.9)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	23 (1.9)	77 (1.9)	29 (1.5)	1 (0.5)
	Southeast	24 (2.2)	76 (2.2)	32 (2.3)	3 (0.8)
	Nation	20 (1.0)	80 (1.0)	38 (1.4)	3 (0.6)
Information not available					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	45 (9.3)!	55 (9.3)!	26 (5.6)!	5 (3.0)!
	Southeast	42 (4.4)!	58 (4.4)!	27 (9.3)!	6 (3.0)!
	Nation	30 (4.0)!	70 (4.0)!	38 (6.3)!	10 (2.0)!
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	27 (11.7)!	73 (11.7)!	29 (10.0)!	4 (****)!
	Southeast	33 (9.6)!	67 (9.6)!	24 (5.8)!	1 (0.6)!
	Nation	25 (3.1)	75 (3.1)	35 (2.9)	4 (0.9)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280); *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322); and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. ! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic. **** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Type of Location

Attention has been given recently to America's urban schools, often with the perception that these schools and their students compare less favorably to their nonurban counterparts.[9] Information on students according to school location is important to the efforts to ensure equal access to a high quality education for all. NAEP public school location is based on both the NCES Common Core of Data (CCD) and the Quality Education Data (QED) file, as drawn from U.S. Census data and definitions.

Schools that participated in the assessment were classified into three mutually exclusive types of geographic location—Central City, Urban Fringe/Large Town, and Rural/Small Town. General information (including definitions) about these categories and schools' categorization within them can be found in the technical reports for the 1996 NAEP state assessments in Chapter 3, "Sample Design and Selection." Information on urbanicity specific to the 1998 state assessment will be available in the *NAEP 1998 Technical Report*.

Table 6A presents fourth- and eighth-grade scale score results according to the location type of the schools that students attended in Arkansas and the nation.

Scale Score Results by Type of Location

In terms of average reading scale scores for public school students in Arkansas, Table 6A reveals the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998 in Arkansas, the average reading scale score of students attending schools in central cities was lower than those of students in urban fringes/large towns and rural areas/small towns.
- The average scale scores of students attending schools in all three types of locations in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1992.
- The average scale scores of students attending schools in all three types of locations in Arkansas did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1994.

Public School Students, Grade 8

- In Arkansas in 1998, the average reading scale score of students attending schools in central cities was not significantly different from those of students in urban fringes/large towns and rural areas/small towns.

[9] U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (1996). *Urban schools: The challenge of location and poverty* (NCES Publication No. 96-184). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

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TABLE 6A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for public school students by type of location: 1992 to 1998

	Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Central city							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	25 (1.4)	199 (3.9)	143 (5.2)	172 (5.4)	202 (5.0)	229 (3.2)	253 (3.4)
Nation	33 (1.8)	208 (1.8)	158 (5.0)	183 (2.4)	209 (1.4)	234 (2.5)	255 (2.3)
1994 Arkansas	28 (3.3)	207 (3.8)	154 (5.6)	182 (5.8)	211 (3.3)	236 (3.1)	254 (2.5)
Nation	34 (2.1)	203 (2.4)	145 (2.6)	174 (3.1)	208 (3.0)	235 (2.7)	256 (2.0)
1992 Arkansas	23 (3.1)	209 (4.0)	159 (3.9)	184 (2.8)	210 (4.8)	235 (4.7)	255 (6.1)
Nation	32 (2.8)	207 (1.5)	159 (2.6)	183 (2.6)	209 (1.9)	232 (1.9)	253 (2.6)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	25 (1.8)	253 (3.1)	207 (4.6)	231 (4.3)	255 (4.4)	278 (3.1)	295 (4.0)
Nation	32 (1.6)	254 (1.7)	205 (2.6)	230 (1.9)	257 (1.2)	281 (1.4)	299 (2.3)
Urban fringe/ large town							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	17 (2.8)	218 (3.2)	170 (3.5)	197 (2.6)	222 (4.4)	243 (3.1)	259 (3.3)
Nation	35 (2.5)<	220 (1.8)	168 (2.8)	197 (2.8)	224 (2.2)	248 (1.9)	266 (1.9)
1994 Arkansas	18 (4.0)	212 (4.1)!	159 (6.7)!	187 (8.5)!	216 (4.9)!	241 (3.9)!	261 (4.0)!
Nation	43 (2.5)	219 (1.9)	166 (4.1)	196 (3.0)	223 (1.1)	246 (1.7)	265 (3.0)
1992 Arkansas	15 (4.1)	215 (2.3)!	170 (8.2)!	191 (5.0)!	215 (2.1)!	240 (2.8)!	258 (2.3)!
Nation	40 (3.6)	219 (2.2)	173 (4.4)	196 (2.1)	222 (2.6)	244 (1.9)	263 (3.5)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	14 (1.9)	262 (2.9)	221 (4.1)	242 (2.8)	264 (3.8)	282 (3.7)	300 (4.4)
Nation	40 (2.0)	266 (1.4)	222 (2.0)	245 (2.3)	269 (1.6)	289 (1.0)	306 (1.8)
Rural/small town							
Grade 4							
1998 Arkansas	58 (2.9)	210 (1.6)	163 (3.0)	188 (1.9)	214 (2.4)	236 (1.8)	254 (1.2)
Nation	32 (2.1)>	218 (1.2)	172 (1.3)	196 (1.2)	221 (1.7)	243 (1.6)	261 (1.7)
1994 Arkansas	54 (3.5)	208 (1.8)	156 (5.1)	184 (2.8)	212 (1.9)	236 (1.8)	256 (1.9)
Nation	23 (2.3)	213 (1.8)	162 (3.0)	189 (2.8)	217 (1.8)	240 (2.1)	260 (2.1)
1992 Arkansas	63 (3.1)	211 (1.5)	165 (3.4)	189 (1.7)	214 (2.8)	235 (1.3)	253 (2.0)
Nation	28 (2.6)	218 (2.4)	173 (2.9)	197 (4.3)	220 (2.1)	240 (2.6)	258 (3.3)
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	61 (2.2)	255 (1.6)	210 (5.0)	236 (1.6)	259 (1.5)	279 (1.7)	295 (1.4)
Nation	28 (1.6)	263 (1.5)	218 (3.4)	241 (1.6)	266 (1.9)	286 (1.5)	305 (1.9)

The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation >(<) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation =(=) appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. Characteristics of the school sample do not permit reliable regional results for type of location. ! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

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Achievement Level Results by Type of Location

In terms of achievement levels for public school students in Arkansas, Table 6B indicates the following.

Public School Students, Grade 4

- In 1998, the percentage of students attending schools in central cities in Arkansas who performed at or above the *Proficient* level was not significantly different from the corresponding percentages for students in urban fringes/large towns and rural areas/small towns.
- The percentages of students attending schools in all three types of locations in Arkansas who performed at or above the *Proficient* level did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1992.
- The percentages of students attending schools in all three types of locations in Arkansas who performed at or above the *Proficient* level did not differ significantly in 1998 from those in 1994.

Public School Students, Grade 8

- For students who attended schools in central cities in Arkansas, the percentage at or above the *Proficient* level was not significantly different from the corresponding percentages for students in urban fringes/large towns and rural areas/small towns.

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TABLE 6B

Percentages of public school students attaining achievement levels by type of location: 1992 to 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Central city					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	56 (4.3)	44 (4.3)	19 (3.1)	4 (1.3)
	Nation	49 (2.1)	51 (2.1)	22 (1.9)	4 (0.6)
1994	Arkansas	47 (3.9)	53 (3.9)	23 (2.8)	4 (1.0)
	Nation	50 (2.7)	50 (2.7)	22 (2.0)	5 (0.9)
1992	Arkansas	48 (4.8)	52 (4.8)	22 (4.3)	4 (1.7)
	Nation	49 (2.0)	51 (2.0)	20 (1.4)	4 (0.7)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	37 (3.7)	63 (3.7)	22 (2.8)	1 (****)
	Nation	36 (2.0)	64 (2.0)	25 (1.4)	2 (0.4)
Urban fringe/large town					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	35 (4.2)	65 (4.2)	30 (4.1)	5 (1.4)
	Nation	34 (2.1)	66 (2.1)	35 (1.8)	9 (0.9)
1994	Arkansas	43 (4.8)†	57 (4.8)†	28 (3.8)†	6 (1.7)†
	Nation	35 (1.8)	65 (1.8)	33 (2.0)	8 (1.1)
1992	Arkansas	40 (2.9)†	60 (2.9)†	27 (2.7)†	5 (0.9)†
	Nation	36 (2.5)	64 (2.5)	31 (2.7)	7 (1.2)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	25 (4.0)	75 (4.0)	27 (3.5)	2 (****)
	Nation	23 (1.6)	77 (1.6)	35 (1.6)	3 (0.7)
Rural/small town					
Grade 4					
1998	Arkansas	44 (2.1)	56 (2.1)	23 (1.9)	4 (0.6)
	Nation	35 (1.8)	65 (1.8)	30 (2.2)	6 (0.7)
1994	Arkansas	47 (2.0)	53 (2.0)	23 (1.7)	5 (1.0)
	Nation	41 (2.6)	59 (2.6)	27 (2.0)	6 (0.7)
1992	Arkansas	44 (2.2)	56 (2.2)	22 (1.3)	3 (0.6)
	Nation	36 (2.5)	64 (2.5)	28 (2.6)	5 (1.5)
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	31 (2.0)	69 (2.0)	23 (1.5)	1 (0.3)
	Nation	26 (1.8)	74 (1.8)	31 (1.7)	2 (0.5)

The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280); *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322); and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. If the notation "<" appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1994 at about the 95 percent confidence level. If the notation ">" appears, it signifies that the 1998 value was significantly higher (lower) than the value for 1992 at about the 95 percent confidence level. Characteristics of the school sample do not permit reliable regional results for type of location. † Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic. **** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

Type of School

The 1994 NAEP assessment marked the first time that nonpublic school students were assessed at the state level. Arkansas met the participation guidelines for reporting nonpublic school results for the reading assessment in 1998 at grade 8.[10] Results are reported for nonpublic schools and also for public and nonpublic schools combined. Arkansas' nonpublic schools did not meet the guidelines for grade 4 in 1998.

At grade 8, approximately 5 percent of students in Arkansas and 11 percent of students nationwide attended nonpublic schools in 1998.

The reader should not make inferences about any apparent differences in performance between students attending public schools and those attending nonpublic schools. Such differences may be related to socioeconomic and sociological factors, such as the level of parental involvement in a child's education.

Additional information on nonpublic schools, including disaggregation by type of nonpublic school, is in the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*.

Table 7A presents scale score results for students in public schools, in nonpublic schools, and for students in public and nonpublic schools combined.

Scale Score Results by Type of School

In terms of average reading scale scores for Arkansas's students, Table 7A provides the following information.

Public and Nonpublic School Students, Grade 8

- The average scale score for students in nonpublic schools in Arkansas was 279. This was higher than that for students in public schools (256).
- The average scale score for Arkansas's nonpublic school students (279) was not significantly different from that for students in the nation's nonpublic schools (281).

[10] The *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* contains full information on the participation guidelines in Appendix A. The *Report Card* is available at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/.

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TABLE 7A

Average reading scale scores and selected percentiles for students by type of school: 1998

	Percentage of total population	Average scale score	Scale score distribution				
			10th percentile	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile
Public							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	95 (1.0)	256 (1.3)	210 (4.0)	236 (1.7)	259 (1.4)	279 (1.2)	296 (1.5)
Southeast	93 (1.9)	258 (1.7)	214 (2.6)	236 (1.6)	260 (2.2)	281 (1.7)	299 (1.5)
Nation	89 (1.5)	261 (0.8)	215 (1.6)	239 (1.3)	264 (1.1)	286 (0.8)	304 (1.2)
Nonpublic							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	5 (1.0)	279 (7.5)!	245 (14.3)!	264 (8.2)!	280 (4.1)!	296 (5.8)!	313 (8.5)!
Southeast	7 (1.9)	280 (2.4)!	245 (3.3)!	265 (3.7)!	283 (2.2)!	297 (2.0)!	312 (3.8)!
Nation	11 (1.5)	281 (1.6)	245 (4.1)	264 (2.1)	284 (1.4)	300 (1.8)	315 (1.6)
Combined							
Grade 8							
1998 Arkansas	100 (****)	257 (1.3)	212 (4.0)	237 (1.6)	260 (1.3)	280 (1.0)	297 (1.8)
Southeast	100 (****)	259 (1.4)	216 (1.6)	238 (1.9)	261 (1.7)	283 (1.4)	300 (1.5)
Nation	100 (****)	264 (0.8)	217 (1.8)	242 (0.8)	267 (0.8)	288 (0.6)	305 (1.0)

The *Combined* sample may include students attending Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and/or Department of Defense (DoDEA/DDESS) schools. These students are not included in either the *Public* or the *Nonpublic* sample. The NAEP reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses.
! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic.
**** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Achievement Level Results by Type of School

In terms of achievement levels attained by Arkansas's students, Table 7B shows the following.

Public and Nonpublic School Students, Grade 8

- The percentage of nonpublic school students in Arkansas who were at or above the *Proficient* level was 50 percent. This was greater than the corresponding percentage for students in public schools (23 percent).
- The percentage of nonpublic school students at or above the *Proficient* level in Arkansas (50 percent) was not significantly different from the corresponding percentage for students in the nation's nonpublic schools (54 percent).

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TABLE 7B

Percentage of students attaining achievement levels by type of school: 1998

		Below *Basic*	At or Above *Basic*	At or Above *Proficient*	*Advanced*
Public					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	32 (1.7)	68 (1.7)	23 (1.3)	1 (0.4)
	Southeast	32 (2.1)	68 (2.1)	25 (1.9)	2 (0.4)
	Nation	28 (0.9)	72 (0.9)	31 (0.9)	2 (0.4)
Nonpublic					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	9 (****)!	91 (****)!	50 (9.7)!	4 (****)!
	Southeast	9 (3.1)!	91 (3.1)!	53 (4.5)!	4 (1.4)!
	Nation	9 (1.8)	91 (1.8)	54 (2.4)	5 (0.8)
Combined					
Grade 8					
1998	Arkansas	31 (1.6)	69 (1.6)	24 (1.4)	1 (0.3)
	Southeast	30 (1.8)	70 (1.8)	27 (1.7)	2 (0.4)
	Nation	26 (0.9)	74 (0.9)	33 (0.9)	3 (0.4)

The *Combined* sample may include students attending Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools and/or Department of Defense (DoDEA/DDESS) schools. These students are not included in either the *Public* or the *Nonpublic* sample. The achievement levels correspond to the following points on the NAEP reading scale at grade 4 (and 8): *Basic*, 208-237 (243-280), *Proficient*, 238-267 (281-322), and *Advanced*, 268 (323) and above. The standard errors of the statistics in the table appear in parentheses. ! Interpret with caution—the nature of the sample does not allow accurate determination of the variability of this statistic. **** Standard error estimates cannot be accurately determined.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

Appendix A Where to Find More Information

Below are only a few suggestions for finding additional NAEP results and related information. In spring 1999, a hyperlinked version of this section will be available from the Web page that introduces the 1998 state reports, http://nces.ed.gov/naep/. Many of the reports and data files on the Web will require the use of the (free) Adobe Acrobat Reader; for tips on installing the Reader, click on the *Help* button.

Details of the NAEP Reading Assessment

For details of the assessment, refer to the companion report, the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*. Both that report and the *NAEP 1998 Reading State Reports* are available on the NCES Web site, http://nces.ed.gov/naep/. For details of the framework on which the reading assessment was developed, see http://www.nagb.org/. Click on the *Publications* button on the left, and then click on *Reading Framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress: 1992–1998*.

Late in 1999, technical information about the assessment will be available in the *NAEP 1998 Technical Report*. Until that technical report is available, many questions may be answered by searching in the *Technical Report of the NAEP 1996 State Assessment Program in Mathematics*, to be found at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/naep1996.html. The mathematics assessment was also on a cross-grade scale, so mathematics scaling procedures would be more similar to reading than would the scaling procedures in the science assessment (which was on a within-grade scale).

Participation by All Jurisdictions in 1998

Information on each jurisdiction's participation rates for schools and students is in Appendix A of the companion report, the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card*, to be found at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/. Participation rates from previous years are included in the *Technical Report* for the given year.

Additional Results from the Reading Assessment

For more findings from the 1998 reading assessments, refer to the 1998 results at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/. On the release date, the summary data tables (SDTs) at this site will include student and school variables for all jurisdictions, the nation, and the four NAEP geographic regions. In the spring of 1999, complete SDTs will be available for all jurisdictions, with all background questions cross-tabulated with the major demographic reporting variables (for instance, hours of television watched by level of parental education or limited English proficiency by race/ethnicity). Summary tables will also be available for the jurisdictions' schools and teachers. Results by the purposes for reading will also appear in summary data tables in spring 1999.

The **variables reported in the *State Reports*** may be found in the summary data tables at http://nces.ed.naep/. The variables reported here, with their labels in the tables are:

- **Gender**. This is DSEX in the data tables. Reports documenting or surveying gender differences in reading include *NAEP 1996 Trends in Academic Progress* at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/naep1996.html and *The Condition of Education*, for instance, *Indicator 20* at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs/ce/c9620a01.html.
- **Race/Ethnicity**. This is DRACE in the tables. An instructive explanation of the derivation appears in Appendix A of the *Reading Report Card*, at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/.
- **Students' Reports of Parents' Highest Education Level**. PARED is a derived variable also described in Appendix A of the *Reading Report Card*. The effect of parental education is discussed in a paper by Grissmer, Kirby, Berends, and Williamson (1994) at http://www.rand.org/publications/MR/MR535/MR535.html.
- **Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Program Eligibility**. The variable reported here is SLUNCH1, which is a version of SLUNCH with several of the categories of SLUNCH (e.g., reduced and free) combined. A description of the program is available at http://www.usda.gov/fcs/cnp/school†2.htm.
- **Type of Location**. TOL3 is the label in the summary data tables. The TOL variable uses data from Common Core of Data (see http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/index.html), Private School Survey (see http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss.html), and Quality Education Data (see http://www.qeddata.com/).
- **Type of School**. SCHTYPE is the label in the tables. Note that the *Nonpublic* school sample includes *Private* and *Catholic* school students. *BIA* (Bureau of Indian Affairs) and *DoDEA* (Department of Defense Education Activity) students are in the *Combined* sample only.

At http://nces.ed.gov/naep/, there is a *Help* button leading to more information on these variables, including how the derived variables were created, and other useful information about the summary data tables.

Publications from NAEP Reading Assessments

NAEP also offers various special reports on reading that may be of particular interest to teachers. These may be ordered from the source at the end of this section, and some of them can be accessed and printed from the Web.

- *Reading Framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress: 1992–1998*, from the National Assessment Governing Board (available at http://www.nagb.org/)
- *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card for the Nation and the States*, the companion to this State Report (available at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/, the NAEP Web site)
- *NAEP 1998 Reading Sample Questions and Student Responses: Results from Public School Students in the States and Nationwide*, a forthcoming brochure with state-level results for the released items
- *The NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card National Highlights*, a brochure with student samples, covering the national and state NAEP 1998 Reading Assessment (available at the NAEP Web site)
- *Listening to Children Read Aloud, Data from NAEP's Integrated Reading Performance Record (IRPR) at Grade 4*, results from the 1992 IRPR, a special study conducted with a subgroup of fourth graders who participated in the 1992 NAEP Reading Assessment (available in print only)
- *Interviewing Children About their Literacy Experiences, Data from NAEP's Integrated Reading Performance Record (IRPR) at Grade 4*, results from the 1992 IRPR, a special study conducted with a subgroup of fourth graders who participated in the 1992 NAEP Reading Assessment (available in print only)
- *Students Selecting Stories: The Effects of Choice in Reading Assessment*, results from the NAEP Reader Special Survey of the 1994 National Assessment of Educational Progress (available at the NAEP Web site)

For ordering information on these reports, write:

U.S. Department of Education
ED Pubs
P.O. Box 1398
Jessup, MD 20794-1398
or call toll free 1-877-4 ED PUBS (1-877-433-7827)

NAEP reading reports in addition to those listed above are available at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/.

Sample NAEP Questions for Classroom Use

Sample reading questions and student responses from the 1994 reading assessment are now available at http://nces.ed.gov/naep/; look for the sample questions. There are also instructions at this site for copying individual items from the files on the Web into a word processor.

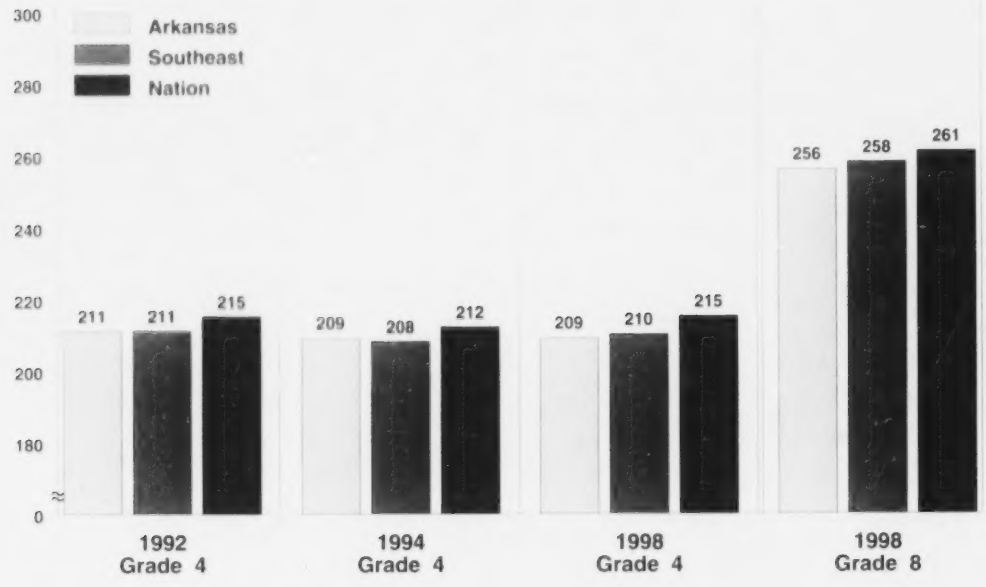
All of the 1998 released items are available now in the *Reading Report Card*. The released items from the 1998 Reading Assessment will appear on the Web in the spring of 1999. Also available will be state-level results for the released items at grades 4 and 8, in a brochure suitable for distribution to schools, *NAEP 1998 Sample Questions and Student Responses*.

Appendix B Figures from Section 1

Figures 1–5 are displayed here in full-page format, with legends and titles but without figure numbers. In each state report on the Web, these figures will appear in color. They may be printed in black-and-white or in color.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD
1998 State Assessment

Average reading scale scores for public school students at grades 4 and 8

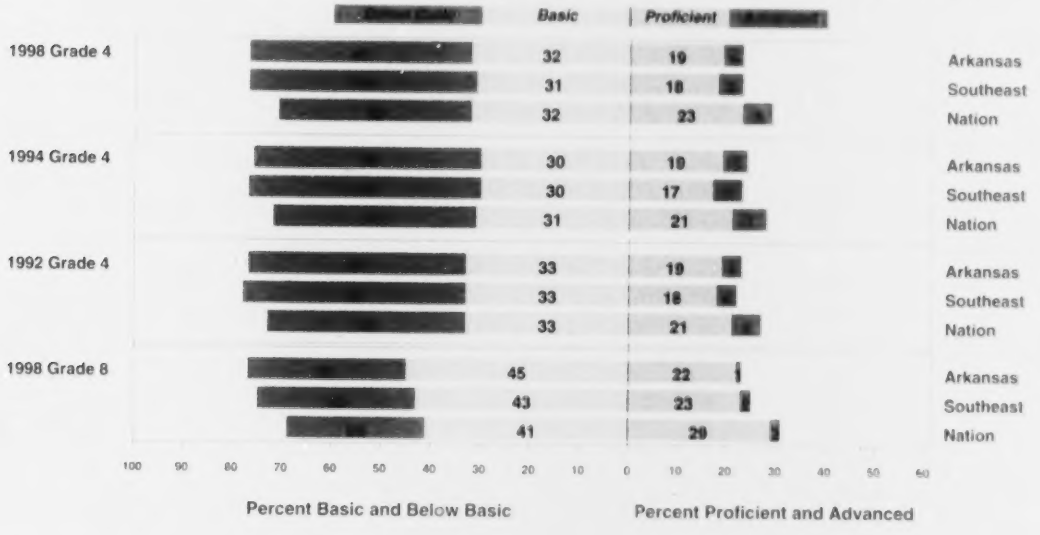


SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD naep 1998 State Assessment

Reading achievement level results for public school students at grades 4 and 8

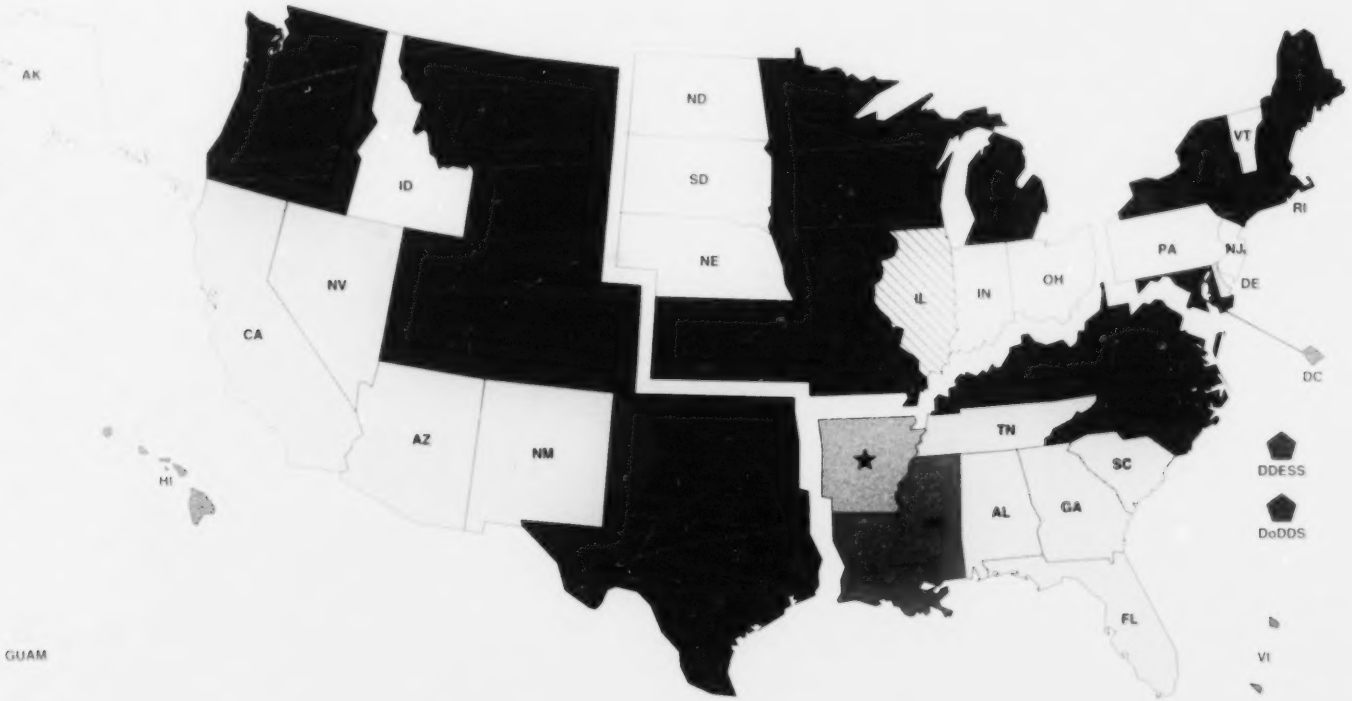
The bars below contain estimated percentages of students in each NAEP reading achievement category. Each population of students is aligned at the point where the Proficient category begins, so that they may be compared at Proficient and above.



SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1992, 1994, and 1998 Reading Assessments.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD
1998 State Assessment

Arkansas's 1998 average reading scale score compared to those for other participating jurisdictions for public school students at grade 4



- Target state
- State has higher average scale score than target state
- State is not significantly different from target state in average scale score
- State has lower average scale score than target state
- State did not meet minimum participation rate guidelines
- State did not participate in the NAEP 1998 Reading State Assessment

Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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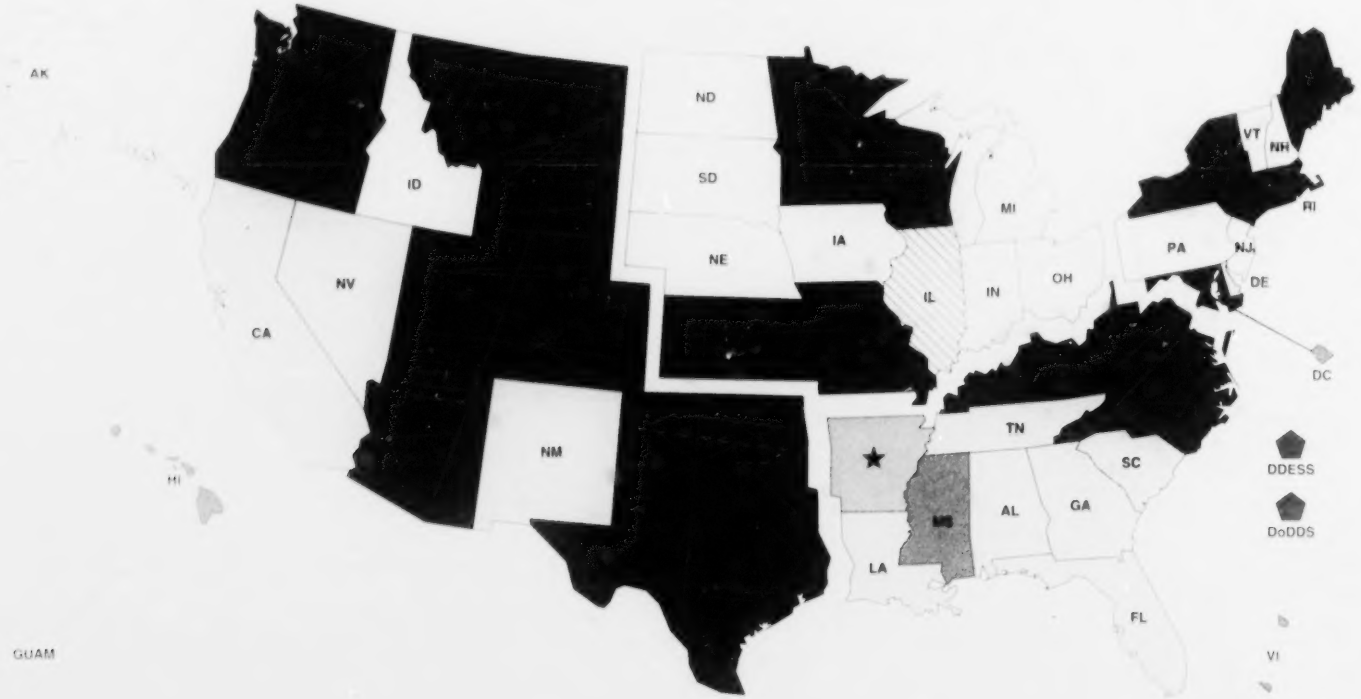
Arkansas's 1998 average reading scale score compared to those for other participating jurisdictions for public school students at grade 8



Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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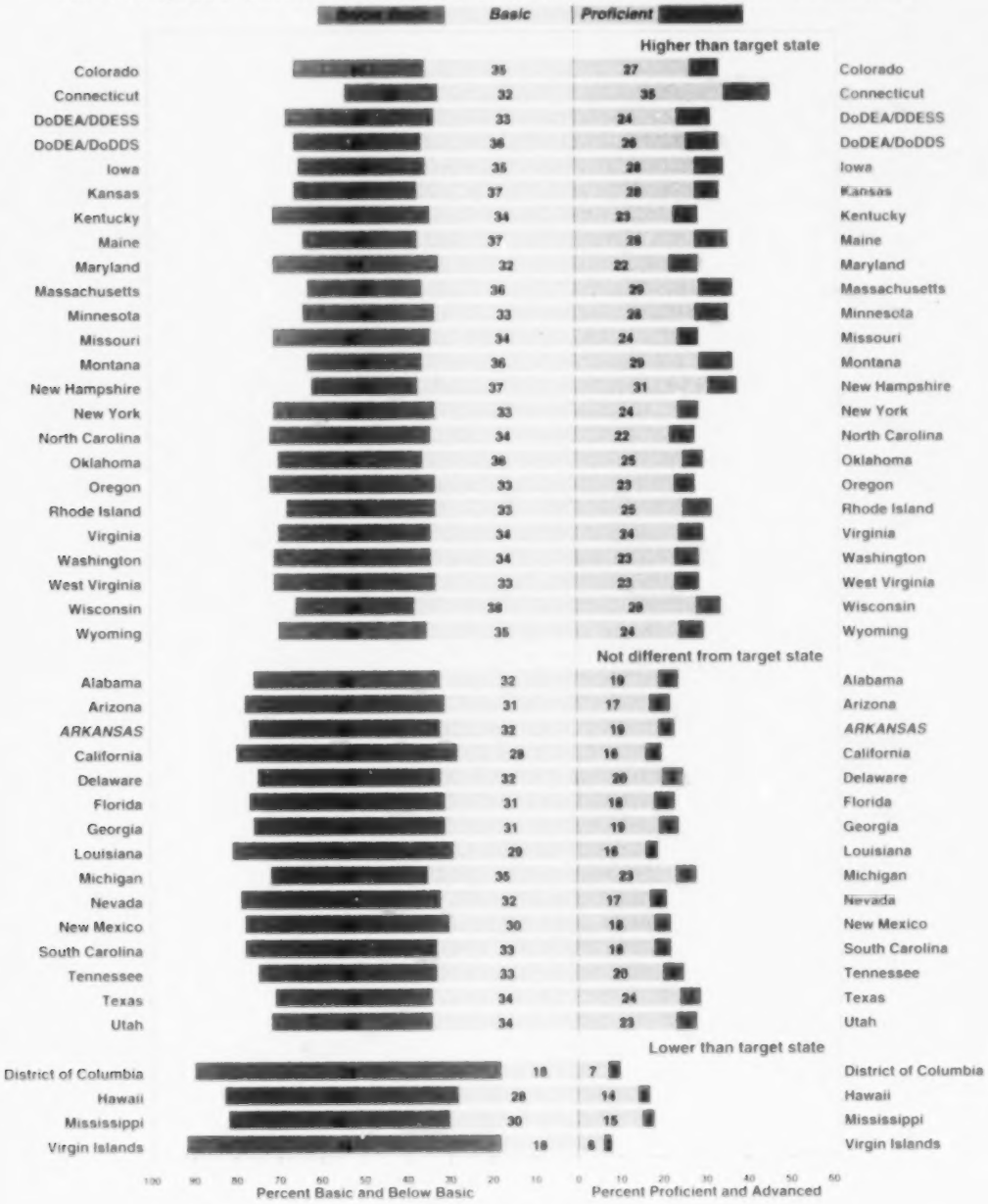
THE NATION'S REPORT CARD
1998 State Assessment

Achievement levels for reading: Comparing the percentage of public school students at or above the Proficient level in Arkansas with those in other participating jurisdictions at grade 4 in 1998

The bars below contain estimated percentages of students in each NAEP reading achievement category. Each population of students is aligned at the point where the Proficient category begins, so that they may be compared at Proficient and above.


Basic
Proficient
Higher than target state
Colorado 35 27 Colorado
Connecticut 32 35 Connecticut
DoDEA/DDESS 33 24 DoDEA/DDESS
DoDEA/DoDDS 36 26 DoDEA/DoDDS
Iowa 35 28 Iowa
Kansas 37 28 Kansas
Kentucky 34 23 Kentucky
Maine 37 28 Maine
Maryland 32 22 Maryland
Massachusetts 36 29 Massachusetts
Minnesota 33 28 Minnesota
Missouri 34 24 Missouri
Montana 36 29 Montana
New Hampshire 37 31 New Hampshire
New York 33 24 New York
North Carolina 34 22 North Carolina
Oklahoma 36 25 Oklahoma
Oregon 33 23 Oregon
Rhode Island 33 25 Rhode Island
Virginia 34 24 Virginia
Washington 34 23 Washington
West Virginia 33 23 West Virginia
Wisconsin 38 28 Wisconsin
Wyoming 35 24 Wyoming
Not different from target state
Alabama 32 19 Alabama
Arizona 31 17 Arizona
ARKANSAS 32 19 ARKANSAS
California 29 16 California
Delaware 32 20 Delaware
Florida 31 18 Florida
Georgia 31 19 Georgia
Louisiana 29 16 Louisiana
Michigan 35 23 Michigan
Nevada 32 17 Nevada
New Mexico 30 18 New Mexico
South Carolina 33 18 South Carolina
Tennessee 33 20 Tennessee
Texas 34 24 Texas
Utah 34 23 Utah
Lower than target state
District of Columbia 18 7 District of Columbia
Hawaii 28 14 Hawaii
Mississippi 30 15 Mississippi
Virgin Islands 18 6 Virgin Islands
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10
Percent Basic and Below Basic
0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Percent Proficient and Advanced

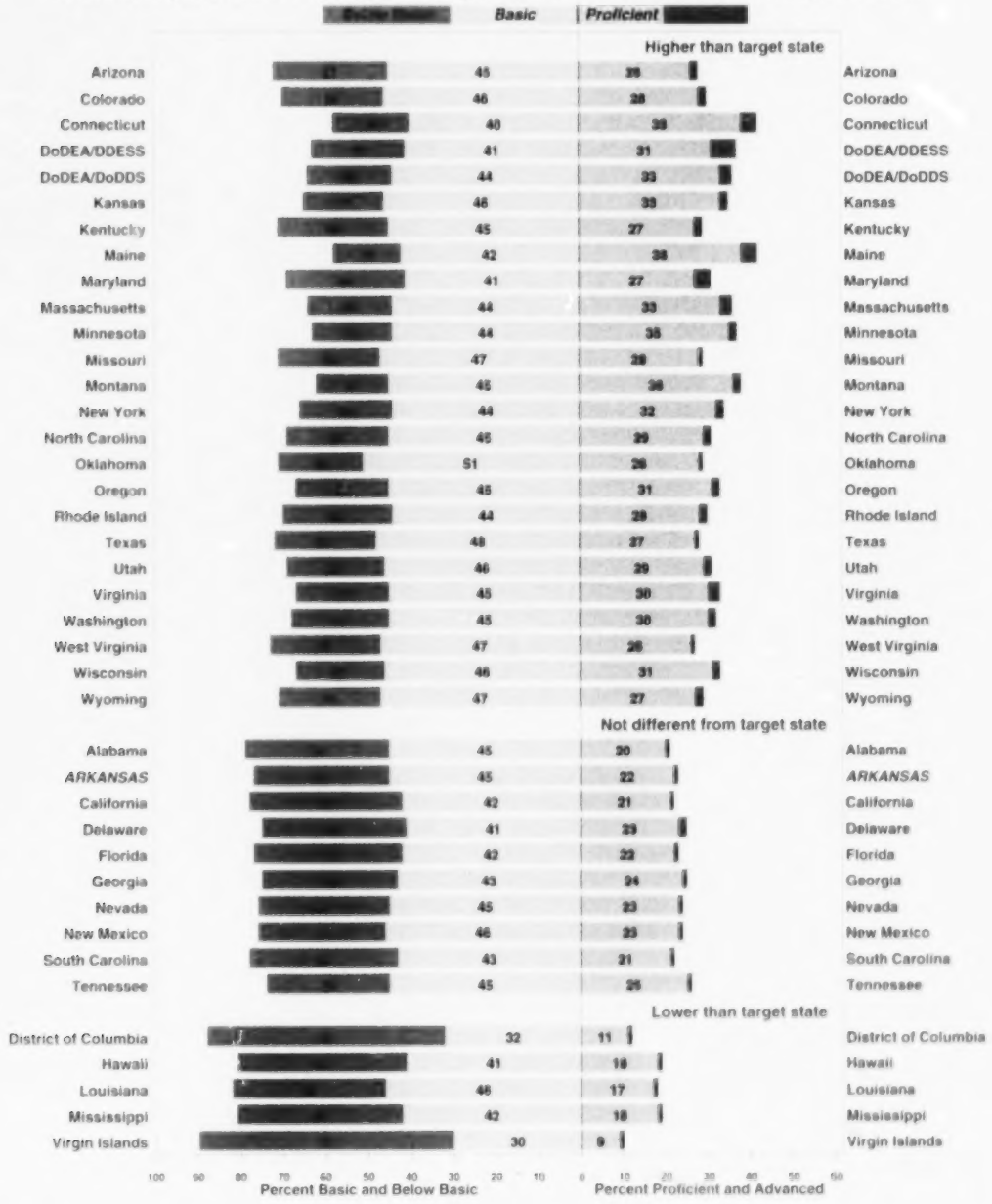
Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

THE NATION'S REPORT CARD
1998 State Assessment

Achievement levels for reading: Comparing the percentage of public school students at or above the Proficient level in Arkansas with those in other participating jurisdictions at grade 8 in 1998

The bars below contain estimated percentages of students in each NAEP reading achievement category. Each population of students is aligned at the point where the Proficient category begins, so that they may be compared at Proficient and above.


Basic
Proficient
Higher than target state
Arizona 45 28 Arizona
Colorado 46 28 Colorado
Connecticut 40 39 Connecticut
DoDEA/DDESS 41 31 DoDEA/DDESS
DoDEA/DoDDS 44 33 DoDEA/DoDDS
Kansas 46 33 Kansas
Kentucky 45 27 Kentucky
Maine 42 36 Maine
Maryland 41 27 Maryland
Massachusetts 44 33 Massachusetts
Minnesota 44 35 Minnesota
Missouri 47 28 Missouri
Montana 45 36 Montana
New York 44 32 New York
North Carolina 45 29 North Carolina
Oklahoma 51 28 Oklahoma
Oregon 45 31 Oregon
Rhode Island 44 29 Rhode Island
Texas 48 27 Texas
Utah 46 29 Utah
Virginia 45 30 Virginia
Washington 45 30 Washington
West Virginia 47 26 West Virginia
Wisconsin 46 31 Wisconsin
Wyoming 47 27 Wyoming
Not different from target state
Alabama 45 20 Alabama
ARKANSAS 45 22 ARKANSAS
California 42 21 California
Delaware 41 23 Delaware
Florida 42 22 Florida
Georgia 43 24 Georgia
Nevada 45 23 Nevada
New Mexico 46 23 New Mexico
South Carolina 43 21 South Carolina
Tennessee 45 25 Tennessee
Lower than target state
District of Columbia 32 11 District of Columbia
Hawaii 41 18 Hawaii
Louisiana 46 17 Louisiana
Mississippi 42 18 Mississippi
Virgin Islands 30 9 Virgin Islands
100 90 80 70 60 50 40 30 20 10
Percent Basic and Below Basic
0 10 20 30 40 50 60
Percent Proficient and Advanced

Differences between states and other jurisdictions may be partially explained by other factors not included in this figure.

SOURCE: National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 1998 Reading Assessment.

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Acknowledgments

The NAEP Reading Assessment has benefited from the many individuals who contributed their considerable knowledge, experience, and creativity to the NAEP 1998 Reading Assessment. Beginning with the committee members who constructed the framework, then the committees who wrote and edited the assessment items with much input from curriculum specialists, and, after the 1992 assessment, the committee meetings necessary to establish achievement level cut scores, the NAEP Reading Assessment has benefited from the contribution of hundreds of interested educators, policy makers, and other citizens. The delivery of the assessment in 1992, 1994, and 1998 involved hundreds of state and local education officials—and especially teachers and school administrators who made it possible for 225,000 fourth and eighth graders to read passages and answer questions for 50 minutes to produce results culminating in the 1998 report card of reading performance.

The NAEP program at Educational Testing Service is directed by Stephen Lazer and John Mazzeo. Patricia Donahue directed the scoring operations for the Reading Assessment. The NAEP state sampling and data collection activities were conducted at Westat under the direction of Nancy Caldwell, Keith Rust, Dianne Walsh, Lisa Alton, and Leslie Wallace, with contributions from many more. Printing, distribution, scoring, and processing activities were conducted by National Computer Systems (NCS) under the direction of Brad Thayer, Patrick Bourgeacq, Charles Brungardt, Tom Huenecke, Cynthia Malott, Connie Smith, and Mathilde Kennel, with the collegial participation of others.

At ETS, the complex statistical and psychometric activities necessary to report results were directed by Nancy Allen, John Barone, James Carlson, John Donoghue, and David Freund. Steve Isham, Jiahe Qian, and Lois Worthington were directly responsible for coordinating the analysis work. Edward Kulick, Venus Leung, Bruce Kaplan, Jinming Zhang, and others contributed to special aspects of the project.

Even computer-generated reports require a lot of human input in planning, writing, programming, and integrating graphics. After that, they require further assistance getting onto the Web. This computer-generated report demanded even more human input than its predecessors, for it underwent a transmogrification from a book with over 200 pages to a booklet with just over 50 pages. This transformation was due to requests from the NAEP jurisdictions for results that were easier to disseminate and the response of NCES and NAGB to these needs.

Frances Stancavage of American Institutes for Research twice elicited critical input from the NAEP Network, whose members were willing to give their time and attention to producing a more useful report. In shaping the report, Al Rogers and Laura Jerry broke through the barriers imposed by the mainframe to integrate graphics. The NAEP jurisdictions continued to shape the report with several additional reviews; in the process, they helped fine-tune the new graphics.

Throughout this process, many important editorial contributions were received from two reviewers outside the Department of Education or Educational Testing Service: Peter Mosenthal at Syracuse University and Timothy Shanahan at the University of Illinois at Chicago. From the Department of Education, the following contributed much, and read this report at several different stages: Marilyn McMillen, Chief Statistician at NCES; Janis Brown, Peggy G. Carr, Arnold Goldstein, Andrew Kolstad, Holly Spurlock, Sheida White, and Shi-Chang Wu of the Education Assessment Division; Mary Lyn Bourque, Mary Crovo, and Sharif Shakrani of the National Assessment Governing Board; Shelley Burns, Beth Young, and Kerry Gruber of various OERI departments; and Christina Kary, Qiwu Liu, Erin Massie, Anne Meek, Alan Vanneman, Mark White, and Tracey Zima of the Education Statistics Services Institute. From Educational Testing Service, much assistance was received from Nancy Allen, Jim Carlson, Hua Chang, John Donoghue, Debra Kline, Jo-Lin Liang, John Mazzeo, and Jiahe Qian.

Karlene Farquharson provided editorial assistance, as did Karen Damiano, who made important contributions to all phases of the report. Karen Damiano also ensured that the report was properly printed and reached its intended audience at each review. She did this frequently with planning assistance from Barbette Tardugno. Carol Errickson, Kelly Gibson and Rod Rudder designed the covers of the *NAEP 1998 Reading Report Card* and its companion reports.

The brochure that accompanies the State Report has benefited from reviews by NCES, especially by Sheida White. The input and assistance of many who were involved in the State Report were important, especially those from Karen Damiano, John Mazzeo, and Rod Rudder.

And, finally, Phil Leung and Pat O'Reilly directed the operation of putting the forty-five reading reports on the Web.

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